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FIFTEEN

SERMONS

Preached at the

ROLLS CHAPEL

Upon the following SUBJECTS.

Upon Humane Nature.

Upon the Government of the Tongue.

Upon Compaſſion.

Upon the Character of *Balaam*.

Upon Reſentment.

Upon Forgiveneſs of Injuries.

Upon Self-deceit.

Upon the Love of our Neighbour.

Upon the Love of God.

Upon the Ignorance of Man.

By *JOSEPH BUTLER*, L L. D. Rector of *Stanhope*, and Clerk of the Cloſet to her MAJESTY.

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To the Right Honourable

Sir JOSEPH JEKYLL,

Maſter of the ROLLS, &c.

The following SERMONS, preached in his Chapel, are with all Humility Dedicated,

BY

his moſt dutiful, and

moſt obedient Servant,

JOSEPH BUTLER.

THE

PREFACE.

THOUGH 'tis ſcare poſſible to avoid judging, in ſome way or other, of almoſt every thing which offers itſelf to one's Thoughts; yet 'tis certain that many Perſons, from different Cauſes, never exerciſe their Judgment, upon what comes before them, in the way of determining whether it be concluſive and holds. They are perhaps entertained with ſome things, not ſo with others; they like and they diſlike: But whether that which is propoſed to be made out, be really made out or not; whether a Matter be ſtated according to the real Truth of the Caſe, ſeems to the Generality of People merely a Circumſtance of no Conſideration at all. Arguments are often wanted for ſome accidental Purpoſe: But Proof as ſuch is what they never want for Themſelves; for their own Satisfaction of Mind, or Conduct in Life. Not to mention the Multitudes who read merely for the ſake of Talking, or to qualifie themſelves for the World, or ſome ſuch Kind of

Reaſons; there are, even of the few who read for their own Entertainment, and have a real Curioſity to ſee what is ſaid, ſeveral, which is prodigious, who have no ſort of Curioſity to ſee what is true: I ſay, Curioſity; becauſe 'tis too obvious to be mentioned, how much that religious and ſacred Attention, which is due to Truth, and to the important Queſtion, what is the Rule of Life, is loſt out of the World.

FOR the Sake of this whole Claſs of Readers, for they are of different Capacities, different Kinds, and get into this way from different Occaſions, I have often wiſhed, that it had been the Cuſtom to lay before People nothing in Matters of Argument but Premiſes, and leave them to draw Concluſions themſelves; which, though it could not be done in all Caſes, might in many.

THE great Number of Books and Papers of Amuſement, which, of one Kind or another, daily come in one's way, have in Part occaſioned, and moſt perfectly fall in with and humour, this idle way of reading and conſidering things. By this Means, Time even in Solitude is happily got rid of, without the Pain of Attention: Neither is any Part of it more put to the Account of Idleneſs, one can ſcarce forbear ſaying, is ſpent with leſs Thought, than great Part of that which is ſpent in Reading.

THUS

THUS People habituate themſelves to let things paſs through their Minds, as one may ſpeak, rather than to think of them. Thus by Uſe they become ſatisfied merely with ſeeing what is ſaid, without going any further. Review and Attention, and even forming a Judgment, becomes Fatigue; and to lay any thing before them that requires it, is putting them quite out of their Way.

THERE are alſo Perſons, and there are at leaſt more of them than have a Right to claim ſuch Superiority, who take for granted, that they are acquainted with every thing; and that no Subject, if treated in the Manner it ſhould be, can be treated in any Manner but what is familiar and eaſie to them.

'TIS true indeed, that few Perſons have a Right to demand Attention; but 'tis alſo true, that nothing can be underſtood without that Degree of it, which the very Nature of the thing requires. Now Morals, conſidered as a Science, concerning which ſpeculative Difficulties are daily raiſed, and treated with Regard to thoſe Difficulties, plainly require a very peculiar Attention. For here Ideas never are in themſelves determinate, but become ſo, by the Train of Reaſoning and the Place they ſtand in; ſince 'tis impoſſible that Words can always ſtand for the ſame Ideas, even in the ſame Author, much leſs in different ones. Hence an Argument may not

readily be apprehended, which is different from its being miſtaken; and even Caution to avoid being miſtaken may, in ſome Caſes, render it leſs readily apprehended. 'Tis very unallowable for a Work of Imagination or Entertainment not to be of eaſie Comprehenſion, but may be unavoidable in a Work of another Kind, where a Man is not to form or accommodate, but to ſtate things as he finds them.

It muſt be acknowledged that ſome of the following Diſcourſes are very abſtruſe and difficult; or, if you pleaſe, obſcure: But I muſt take Leave to add, that thoſe alone are Judges, whether or no and how far this is a Fault, who are Judges, whether or no and how far it might have been avoided—thoſe only who will be at the Trouble to underſtand what is here ſaid, and to ſee how far the Things here inſiſted upon, and not other Things, might have been put in a plainer Manner; which yet I am very far from aſſerting that they could not.

Thus much however will be allowed, that general Criticiſms concerning Obſcurity conſidered as a diſtinct thing from Confuſion and Perplexity of Thought, as in ſome Caſes there may be Ground for them; ſo in others, they may be nothing more at the Bottom than Complaints, that every thing is not to be underſtood with the ſame Eaſe

that

that ſome things are. Confuſion and Perplexity in Writing is indeed without Excuſe, becauſe any one may, if he pleaſes, know whether he underſtands and ſees through what he is about: And 'tis unpardonable for a Man to lay his Thoughts before Others, when he is conſcious that he himſelf does not know whereabouts he is, or how the Matter before him ſtands. 'Tis coming Abroad in Diſorder, which he ought to be diſſatisfied to find himſelf in at Home.

BUT even Obſcurities ariſing from other Cauſes than the Abſtruſeneſs of the Argument, may not be always inexcuſable. Thus a Subject may be treated in a Manner, which all along ſuppoſes the Reader acquainted with what has been ſaid upon it, both by ancient and modern Writers; and with what is the preſent ſtate of Opinion in the World concerning ſuch Subject. This will create a Difficulty of a very peculiar Kind, and even throw an Obſcurity over the whole before thoſe who are not thus informed; but thoſe who are, will be diſpoſed to excuſe ſuch a Manner, and other Things of the like Kind, as a ſaving of their Patience.

HOWEVER upon the whole, as the Title of *Sermons* gives ſome Right to expect what is plain and of eaſie Comprehenſion, and as the beſt Auditories are mixt; I ſhall not ſet about to juſtifie the Propriety of Preaching,

or

or under that Title Publiſhing, Diſcourſes ſo abſtruſe as ſome of theſe are: Neither is it worth while to trouble the Reader with the Account of my doing either. He muſt not however impute to me, as a Repetition of the Impropriety, this ſecond Edition, but to the Demand for it.

WHETHER he will think he has any Amends made him, by the following Illuſtrations of what ſeemed moſt to require them, I my ſelf am by no Means a proper Judge.

THERE are two Ways in which the Subject of Morals may be treated. One begins from inquiring into the abſtract Relations of things: the other from a Matter of Fact, namely, what the particular Nature of Man is, its ſeveral Parts, their Oeconomy or Conſtitution; from whence it proceeds to determine what Courſe of Life it is, which is correſpondent to this whole Nature. In the former Method the Concluſion is expreſs'd thus, that Vice is contrary to the Nature and Reaſons of things: In the latter, that 'tis a Violation or Breaking in upon our own Nature. Thus they both lead us to the ſame thing, our Obligations to the Practice of Virtue; and thus they exceedingly ſtrengthen and enforce each other. The firſt ſeems the

moſt direct formal Proof, and in ſome Reſpects the leaſt liable to Cavil and Diſpute: The latter is in a peculiar Manner adapted to ſatisfie a fair Mind; and is more eaſily applicable to the ſeveral particular Relations and Circumſtances in Life.

THE following Diſcourſes proceed chiefly in this latter Method. The three firſt wholly. They were intended to explain what is meant by the Nature of Man, when it is ſaid that Virtue conſiſts in following, and Vice in deviating from it; and by explaining to ſhew that the Aſſertion is true. That the ancient Moraliſts had ſome inward Feeling or other, which they choſe to expreſs in this Manner, that Man is born to Virtue, that it conſiſts in following Nature, and that Vice is more contrary to this Nature than Tortures or Death, their Works in our Hands are Inſtances. Now a Perſon who found no Myſtery in this Way of ſpeaking of the Ancients; who, without being very explicit with himſelf, kept to his natural Feeling, went along with them, and found within himſelf a full Conviction that what they laid down was juſt and true; ſuch an one would probably wonder to ſee a Point, in which he never perceived any Difficulty, ſo laboured as this is, in the ſecond and third Sermons; inſomuch perhaps as to be at a Loſs for the Occaſion, Scope and Drift

Drift of them. But it need not be thought ſtrange that this Manner of Expreſſion, though familiar with them, and, if not uſually carried ſo far, yet not uncommon amongſt Ourſelves, ſhould want explaining; ſince there are ſeveral Perceptions daily felt and ſpoken of, which yet it may not be very eaſie at firſt View to explicate, to diſtinguiſh from all others, and aſcertain exactly what the Idea or Perception is. The many Treatiſes upon the Paſſions are a Proof of this; ſince ſo many would never have undertaken to unfold their ſeveral Complications, and trace and reſolve them into their Principles, if they had thought, what they were endeavouring to ſhew, was obvious to every one, who felt and talked of thoſe Paſſions. Thus, though there ſeems no Ground to doubt, but that the generality of Mankind have the inward Perception expreſs'd ſo commonly in that Manner by the ancient Moraliſts, more than to doubt whether they have thoſe Paſſions; yet it appeared of Uſe to unfold that inward Conviction, and lay it open in a more explicit Manner, than I had ſeen done; eſpecially when there were not wanting Perſons, who manifeſtly miſtook the whole thing, and ſo had great Reaſon to expreſs themſelves diſſatisfied with it. A late Author of great and deſerved Reputation ſays, that to place Virtue in following Nature, is

at beſt a looſe Way of Talk. And he has Reaſon to ſay this, if what I think he intends to expreſs, though with great Decency, be true, that ſcarce any other Senſe can be put upon thoſe Words, but acting as any of the ſeveral Parts, without Diſtinction, of a Man's Nature happened moſt to incline him *.

WHOEVER thinks it worth while to conſider this Matter thoroughly, ſhould begin with ſtating to himſelf exactly the Idea of a Syſtem, Oeconomy or Conſtitution of any particular Nature, or particular any thing: And he will, I ſuppoſe, find, that 'tis an One or a Whole, made up of ſeveral Parts; but yet, that the ſeveral Parts even conſidered as a Whole, do not compleat the Idea, unleſs in the Notion of a Whole, you include the Relations and Reſpects, which thoſe Parts have to each other. Every Work both of Nature and of Art is a Syſtem: And as every particular thing both natural and artificial is for ſome Uſe or Purpoſe out of and beyond itſelf, one may add, to what has been already brought into the Idea of a Syſtem, its Conduciveneſs to this one or more Ends. Let us Inſtance in a Watch——Suppoſe the ſeveral Parts of it taken to Pieces, and placed apart from each other: Let a Man have ever ſo exact a Notion of theſe ſeveral Parts, unleſs he conſiders the Reſpects and Relations

* Rel. of Nature delin. *Ed.* 1724. P. 22, 23.

Relations which they have to each other, he will not have any thing like the Idea of a Watch. Suppoſe theſe ſeveral Parts brought together and any how united: Neither will he yet, be the Union ever ſo cloſe, have an Idea which will bear any Reſemblance to that of a Watch. But let him view thoſe ſeveral Parts put together, or conſider them as to be put together in the Manner of a Watch; let him form a Notion of the Relations which thoſe ſeveral Parts have to each other—all conducive in their reſpective Ways, to this Purpoſe, ſhewing the Hour of the Day; and then he has the Idea of a Watch. Thus it is with Regard to the inward Frame of Man. Appetites, Paſſions, Affections, and the Principle of Reflection, conſidered merely as the ſeveral Parts of our inward Nature, do not at all give us an Idea of the Syſtem or Conſtitution of this Nature: Becauſe the Conſtitution is formed by ſomewhat not yet taken into Conſideration, namely by the Relations, which theſe ſeveral Parts have to each other; the chief of which is the Authority of Reflection or Conſcience. 'Tis from conſidering the Relations which the ſeveral Appetites and Paſſions in the inward Frame have to each other, and above all the Supremacy of Reflection or Conſcience, that we get the Idea of the Syſtem or Conſtitution of Humane Nature.

ture. And from the Idea itſelf 'twill as fully appear, that this our Nature, *i. e.* Conſtitution is adapted to Virtue, as from the Idea of a Watch it appears, that its Nature, *i. e.* Conſtitution or Syſtem is adapted to meaſure Time. What in Fact or Event commonly happens, is nothing to this Queſtion. Every Work of Art is apt to be out of Order: But this is ſo far from being according to its Syſtem, that let the Diſorder increaſe, and 'twill totally deſtroy it. This is merely by Way of Explanation what an Oeconomy, Syſtem or Conſtitution is. And thus far the Caſes are perfectly parallel. If we go further, there is indeed a Difference, nothing to the preſent Purpoſe, but too important an one ever to be omitted. A Machine is inanimate and paſſive: But we are Agents. Our Conſtitution is put in our own Power. We are charged with it: And therefore are accountable for any Diſorder or Violation of it.

THUS nothing can poſſibly be more contrary to Nature than Vice; meaning by Nature, not only the *ſeveral Parts* of our internal Frame, but alſo the *Conſtitution* of it. Poverty and Diſgrace, Tortures and Death are not ſo contrary to it. Miſery and Injuſtice are indeed equally contrary to ſome different Parts of our Nature taken ſingly: But Injuſtice is moreover contrary to the whole Conſtitution of the Nature.

If it be aſked whether this Conſtitution be really what thoſe Philoſophers meant, and whether they would have explained themſelves in this Manner: The Anſwer is the ſame, as if it ſhould be aſked, whether a Perſon, who had often uſed the Word Reſentment and felt the thing, would have explained this Paſſion exactly in the ſame Manner, in which 'tis done in one of theſe Diſcourſes. As I have no Doubt, but that this is a true Account of that Paſſion, which he referr'd to and intended to expreſs by the Word, Reſentment; ſo I have no Doubt, but that this is the true Account of the Ground of that Conviction, which they referr'd to, when they ſaid, Vice was contrary to Nature. And though it ſhould be thought that they meant no more than, that Vice was contrary to the higher and better Part of our Nature; even this implies ſuch a Conſtitution as I have endeavoured to explain. For the very Terms, higher and better, imply a Relation or Reſpect of Parts to each other; and theſe relative Parts, being in one and the ſame Nature, form a Conſtitution and are the very Idea of it. They had a Perception that Injuſtice was contrary to their Nature, and that Pain was ſo alſo. They obſerved theſe two Perceptions totally different, not in Degree, but in Kind: And the Reflecting upon each of them as they thus

thus ſtood in their Nature, wrought a full intuitive Conviction, that more was due and of Right belonged to one of theſe inward Perceptions, than to the other; that it demanded in all Caſes to govern ſuch a Creature as Man. So that upon the whole, this is a fair and true Account of what was the Ground of their Conviction; of what they intended to refer to when they ſaid, Virtue conſiſted in following Nature: A Manner of ſpeaking not looſe and undeterminate, but clear and diſtinct, ſtrictly juſt and true.

THOUGH I am perſuaded the Force of this Conviction is felt by almoſt every one; yet ſince, conſidered as an Argument and put in Words, it appears ſomewhat abſtruſe, and ſince the Connection of it is broken in the three firſt Sermons, it may not be amiſs to give the Reader the whole Argument here in one View.

MANKIND has various Inſtincts and Principles of Action, as brute Creatures have; ſome leading moſt directly and immediately to the good of the Community, and ſome moſt directly to private Good.

MAN has ſeveral which Brutes have not; particularly Reflection or Conſcience, an Approbation of ſome Principles or Actions, and Diſapprobation of others.

BRUTES obey their Inſtincts or Principles of Action, according to certain Rules;

ſuppoſe the Conſtitution of their Body, and the Objects around them.

THE generality of Mankind alſo obey their Inſtincts and Principles, all of them; thoſe Propenſions we call Good, as well as the Bad, according to the ſame Rules; namely the Conſtitution of their Body, and the external Circumſtances which they are in. [Therefore it is not a true Repreſentation of Mankind, to affirm that they are wholly governed by Self-love, the love of Power and ſenſual Appetites: Since, as on the one Hand, they are often actuated by theſe, without any Regard to Right or Wrong; ſo on the other, 'tis manifeſt Fact, that the ſame Perſons, the Generality, are frequently influenced by Friendſhip, Compaſſion, Gratitude; and even a general Abhorrence of what is baſe, and liking of what is fair and juſt, takes its Turn amongſt the other Motives of Action. This is the partial inadequate Notion of Human Nature treated of in the firſt Diſcourſe: And 'tis by this Nature, if one may ſpeak ſo, that the World is in Fact influenced, and kept in that tolerable Order, in which it is.]

BRUTES in acting according to the Rules before-mentioned, their bodily Conſtitution and Circumſtances, act ſuitably to their whole Nature. [It is however to be diſtinctly noted, that the Reaſon why we af-

firm this, is not merely that Brutes in Fact act ſo; for this alone, however univerſal, does not at all determine, whether ſuch Courſe of Action be correſpondent to their whole Nature: But the Reaſon of the Aſſertion is, that as in acting thus, they plainly act conformably to ſomewhat in their Nature, ſo from all Obſervations we are able to make upon them, there does not appear the leaſt Ground to imagine them to have any thing elſe in their Nature, which requires a different Rule or Courſe of Action.]

MANKIND alſo in acting thus would act ſuitably to their whole Nature, if no more were to be ſaid of Man's Nature, than what has been now ſaid; if That, as it is a true, were alſo a compleat, adequate Account of our Nature.

BUT That is not a compleat Account of Man's Nature. Somewhat further muſt be brought in to give us an adequate Notion of it; namely, that one of thoſe Principles of Action, Conſcience or Reflection, compared with the reſt as they all ſtand together in the Nature of Man, plainly bears upon it Marks of Authority over all the reſt, and claims the abſolute Direction of them all, to allow or forbid their Gratification: A Diſapprobation of Reflection being in itſelf a Principle manifeſtly ſuperiour to a mere Propenſion. And the Concluſion is, that to

allow no more to this ſuperiour Principle or Part of our Nature, than to other Parts; to let it govern and guide only occaſionally in common with the reſt, as its Turn happens to come, from the Temper and Circumſtances one happens to be in; this is not to act conformably to the Conſtitution of Man. Neither can any Human Creature be ſaid to act conformably to his Conſtitution of Nature, unleſs he allows to that ſuperior Principle the abſolute Authority which is due to it. And this Concluſion is abundantly confirmed from hence, that one may determine what Courſe of Action the Oeconomy of Man's Nature requires, without ſo much as knowing in what Degrees of *Strength* the ſeveral Principles prevail, or which of them have actually the greateſt Influence.

THE practical Reaſon of inſiſting ſo much upon this natural Authority of the Principle of Reflection or Conſcience is, that it ſeems in great Meaſure over-looked by many, who are by no Means the worſe ſort of Men. 'Tis thought ſufficient to abſtain from groſs Wickedneſs, and to be humane and kind to ſuch as happen to come in their way. Whereas in reality the very Conſtitution of our Nature requires, that we bring our whole Conduct before this ſuperior Faculty; wait its Determination; enforce upon ourſelves its Authority, and make it the Buſineſs of our Lives,

Lives, as it is absolutely the whole Business of a Moral Agent, to conform ourselves to it. This is the true Meaning of that ancient Precept, *Reverence thy Self.*

THE not taking into Consideration this Authority, which is implied in the Idea of reflex Approbation or Disapprobation, seems a material Deficiency or Omission in *Lord Shaftsbury's Inquiry concerning Virtue.* He has shewn beyond all Contradiction, that Virtue is naturally the Interest or Happiness, and Vice the Misery of such a Creature as Man, placed in the Circumstances which we are in this World. But suppose there are particular Exceptions; a Case which this Author was unwilling to put, and yet surely it is to be put: Or suppose a Case which He has put and determined, that of a Sceptick not convinced of this happy Tendency of Virtue, or being of a contrary Opinion. His Determination is, that 'twould be *without Remedy* *. One may say more explicitly, that leaving out the Authority of reflex Approbation or Disapprobation, such an one would be under an Obligation to act vicioully; since Interest, one's own Happiness, is a manifest Obligation, and there is not supposed to be any other Obligation in the Case. But does it

* Characteristicks. V. 2. p. 69.

"much mend the Matter, to take in that "natural Authority of Reflection? There "indeed would be an Obligation to Vir-"tue; but would not the Obligation from "ſuppoſed Intereſt on the ſide of Vice re-"main?" If it ſhould, yet to be under two contrary Obligations, *i. e.* under none at all, would not be exactly the ſame, as to be under a formal Obligation to be Vitious, or to be in Circumſtances in which the Conſtitution of Man's Nature plainly required, that Vice ſhould be preferr'd. But the Obligation on the ſide of Intereſt really does not remain. For the natural Authority of the Principle of Reflection, is an Obligation the moſt near and intimate, the moſt certain and known: Whereas the contrary Obligation can at the utmoſt appear no more than probable; ſince no Man can be *certain* in any Circumſtances, that Vice is his Intereſt in the preſent World, much leſs can he be certain againſt another: And thus the certain Obligation would intirely ſuperſede and deſtroy the uncertain one; which yet would have been of real Force without the former.

In Truth the taking in this Conſideration, totally changes the whole ſtate of the Caſe; and ſhews, what this Author does not ſeem to have been aware of, that the greateſt Degree of Scepticiſm which He thought poſſible, will ſtill leave Men under the

the ſtricteſt Moral Obligations, whatever their Opinion be concerning the Happineſs of Virtue. For that Mankind upon Reflection felt an Approbation of what was Good, and Diſapprobation of the Contrary, He thought a plain Matter of Fact, as it undoubtedly is, which none could deny, but from mere Affectation. Take in then that Authority and Obligation, which is a conſtituent Part of this reflex Approbation, and it will undeniably follow, though a Man ſhould doubt of every thing elſe, yet, that he would ſtill remain under the neareſt and moſt certain Obligation to the Practice of Virtue; an Obligation implied in the very Idea of Virtue, in the very Idea of reflex Approbation.

AND how little Influence ſoever this Obligation alone, can be expected to have in Fact upon Mankind, yet one may appeal even to Intereſt and Self-love, and aſk, ſince from Man's Nature, Condition and the ſhortneſs of Life, ſo little, ſo very little indeed, can poſſibly in any Caſe be gained by Vice; whether it be ſo prodigious a thing to ſacrifice that little, to the moſt intimate of all Obligations; and which a Man cannot tranſgreſs without being Self-condemned, and, unleſs he has corrupted his Nature, without real Self-diſlike: This Queſtion I ſay may be aſked, even upon Suppoſition that

the Prospect of a future Life were ever so uncertain.

THE Observation that Man is thus by his very Nature a Law to himself, pursued to its just Consequences, is of the utmost Importance; because from it 'twill follow, that though Men should, through Stupidity or Speculative Scepticism, be ignorant of or disbelieve any Authority in the Universe to punish the Violation of this Law; yet, if there should be such Authority, they would be as really liable to Punishment, as though they had been before-hand convinced, that such Punishment would follow. For in whatever Sense we understand Justice, even supposing, what I think would be very presumptuous to assert, that the End of Divine Punishment is no other than that of civil Punishment, namely, to prevent future Mischief; upon this bold Supposition, Ignorance or Disbelief of the Sanction would by no Means exempt even from this Justice: Because it is not Foreknowledge of the Punishment, which renders obnoxious to it; but merely Violating a known Obligation.

AND here it comes in one's Way to take Notice of a manifest Error or Mistake, in the Author now cited, unless perhaps he has incautiously expressed himself so as to be misunderstood; namely, that *it is Malice only,*

and not Goodneſs, which can make us afraid *. Whereas in Reality, Goodneſs is the natural and juſt Object of the greateſt Fear to an ill Man. Malice may be appeaſed or ſatiated; Humour may change: But Goodneſs is a fixt, ſteady, immoveable Principle of Action. If either of the former holds the Sword of Juſtice, there is plainly Ground for the greateſt of Crimes to hope for Impunity: But if it be Goodneſs, there can be no poſſible Hope, whilſt the Reaſons of Things, or the Ends of Government, call for Puniſhments. Thus every one ſees, how much greater Chance of Impunity, an ill Man has, in a partial Adminiſtration, than in a juſt and upright one. It is ſaid, that *the Intereſt or Good of the Whole, muſt be the Intereſt of the univerſal Being, and that He can have no other.* Be it ſo. This Author has proved, that Vice is naturally the Miſery of Mankind in this World. Conſequently it was for the Good of the Whole, that it ſhould be ſo. What ſhadow of Reaſon then is there to aſſert, that this may not be the Caſe hereafter? Danger of future Puniſhment (and if there be Danger, there is Ground of Fear) no more ſuppoſes Malice, than the preſent Feeling of Puniſhment does.

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* Charact. V. I. p. 39.

THE Sermon *upon the Character of Balaam*, and that *upon Self-Deceit* both relate to one Subject. I am perſuaded, that a very great Part of the Wickedneſs of the World, is, one Way or other, owing to the Self-partiality, Self-flattery and Self-deceit endeavoured there to be laid open and explained. 'Tis to be obſerved amongſt Perſons of the loweſt Rank, in Proportion to their Compaſs of Thought, as much as amongſt Men of Education and Improvement. It ſeems, that People are capable of being thus artful with Themſelves, in Proportion as they are capable of being ſo with Others. Thoſe who have taken Notice that there is really ſuch a Thing, namely, plain Falſeneſs and Inſincerity in Men with Regard to Themſelves, will readily ſee the Drift and Deſign of theſe Diſcourſes: And nothing, that I can add, will explain the Deſign of them to him, who has not beforehand remarked, at leaſt, ſomewhat of the Character. And yet, the Admonitions they contain, may be as much wanted by ſuch a Perſon, as by Others; for 'tis to be noted, that a Man may be intirely poſſeſs'd by this Unfairneſs of Mind, without having the leaſt ſpeculative Notion what the Thing is.

THE

THE Account given of *Reſentment* in the Eighth Sermon, is introductory to the following one *Upon Forgiveneſs of Injuries*. It may poſſibly have appeared to ſome, at firſt ſight, a ſtrange Aſſertion, that Injury is the only natural Object of ſettled Reſentment, or that Men do not in Fact reſent deliberately any thing but under this Appearance of Injury. But I muſt deſire the Reader not to take any Aſſertion alone by itſelf, but to conſider the whole of what is ſaid upon it: Becauſe this is neceſſary, not only in Order to judge of the Truth of it, but often, ſuch is the Nature of Language, to ſee the very Meaning of the Aſſertion. Particularly as to this, Injury and Injuſtice is, in the Sermon itſelf, explained to mean, not only the more groſs and ſhocking Inſtances of Wickedneſs, but alſo Contempt, Scorn, Neglect, any ſort of diſagreeable Behaviour towards a Perſon, which he thinks other than what is due to him. And the general Notion of Injury or Wrong, plainly comprehends this, though the Words are moſtly confined to the higher Degrees of it.

FORGIVENESS of Injuries is one of the very few moral Obligations which has been diſputed. But the Proof that it is really an Obligation, what our Nature and Condition require, ſeems very obvious, were

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it only from the Conſideration that Revenge is doing Harm merely for Harm's ſake. And as to the Love of our Enemies: Reſentment cannot ſuperſede the Obligation to univerſal Benevolence, unleſs they are in the Nature of the thing inconſiſtent, which they plainly are not *.

THIS Divine Precept, to forgive Injuries and love our Enemies, though to be met with in Gentile Moraliſts, yet is in a peculiar Senſe a Precept of Chriſtianity; as our Saviour has inſiſted more upon it, than upon any other ſingle Virtue. One Reaſon of this doubtleſs is, that it ſo peculiarly becomes an imperfect, faulty Creature. But it may be obſerved alſo, that a virtuous Temper of Mind, Conſciouſneſs of Innocence and good Meaning towards every body, and a ſtrong Feeling of Injuſtice and Injury, may itſelf, ſuch is the Imperfection of our Virtue, lead a Perſon to violate this Obligation, if he be not upon his Guard. And it may well be ſuppoſed, that this is another Reaſon why it is ſo much inſiſted upon by Him, who *knew what was in Man.*

THE chief Deſign of the Eleventh Diſcourſe is to ſtate the Notion of Self-love and Diſintereſtedneſs, in Order to ſhew that Benevolence

* p. 165.

nevolence is not more unfriendly to Self-love, than any other particular Affection whatever. There is a ſtrange Affectation in many People of explaining away all particular Affections, and repreſenting the whole of Life as nothing but one continued Exerciſe of Self-love. Hence ariſes that ſurprizing Confuſion and Perplexity in the *Epicureans* * of old, *Hobbs*, the Author of *Reflexions Sentences, et Maximes Morales*, and this whole Sect of Writers; the Confuſion of calling Actions intereſted which are done in Contradiction to the moſt manifeſt known Intereſt, merely for the Gratification of a preſent Paſſion. Now all this Confuſion might eaſily be avoided, by ſtating to Ourſelves wherein the Idea of Self-love in general conſiſts, as diſtinguiſhed from all particular Movements towards particular external Objects; the Appetites of Senſe, Reſentment, Compaſſion, Curioſity, Ambition and

* One need only look into *Torquatus's* Account of the Epicurean Syſtem, in *Cicero's* firſt Book *De Finibus*, to ſee, in what a ſurprizing Manner this was done by Them. Thus the Deſire of Praiſe, and of being beloved, he explains to be no other, than Deſire of Safety: Regard to our Country, even in the moſt virtuous Character, to be nothing but Regard to Ourſelves. The Author of *Reflexions &c. Morales* ſays, Curioſity proceeds from Intereſt or Pride; which Pride alſo would doubtleſs have been explained to Self-love. Pag. 85. *Ed.* 1725. As if there were no ſuch Paſſions in Mankind, as Deſire of Eſteem, or of being Beloved, or of Knowledge. *Hobbs's* Account of the Affections of Goodwill and Pity, are Inſtances of the ſame Kind.

and the reſt *. When this is done, if the Words *Selfiſh* and *Intereſted* cannot be parted with, but muſt be applied to every thing; yet, to avoid ſuch total Confuſion of all Language, let the Diſtinction be made by Epithets: And the firſt may be called cool or ſetled Selfiſhneſs, and the other paſſionate or ſenſual Selfiſhneſs. But the moſt natural Way of ſpeaking plainly is, to call the firſt only, Self-love, and the Actions proceeding from it, intereſted: And to ſay of the latter, that they are not Love to Ourſelves, but Movements towards ſomewhat external: Honour, Power, the Harm or Good of Another: And that the Purſuit of theſe external Objects, ſo far as it proceeds from theſe Movements (for it may proceed from Self-love †) is no otherwiſe intereſted, than as every Action of every Creature muſt, from the Nature of the thing, be; for no one can act but from a Deſire, or Choice, or Preference of his own.

SELF-LOVE and any particular Paſſion may be joined together; and from this Complication, it becomes impoſſible in numberleſs Inſtances to determine preciſely, how far an Action, perhaps even of one's own, has for its Principle general Self-love, or ſome particular Paſſion. But this need create no Confuſion in the Ideas themſelves of

* p. 205. &c. † See the Note, p. 9.

of Self-love and particular Paſſions. We diſtinctly diſcern what one is, and what the other are; though we may be uncertain how far one or the other influences us. And though from this Uncertainty, it cannot but be, that there will be different Opinions concerning Mankind, as more or leſs, governed by Intereſt; and ſome will aſcribe Actions to Self-love, which Others will aſcribe to particular Paſſions: Yet 'tis abſurd to ſay that Mankind are wholly actuated by either; ſince 'tis manifeſt that both have their Influence. For as on the one Hand, Men form a general Notion of Intereſt, ſome placing it in one Thing, and ſome in another, and have a conſiderable Regard to it throughout the Courſe of their Life, which is owing to Self-love; ſo on the other Hand, they are often ſet on Work by the particular Paſſions themſelves, and a conſiderable Part of Life is ſpent in the actual Gratification of them, *i. e.* is employed, not by Self-love, but by the Paſſions.

Besides, the very Idea of an intereſted Purſuit, neceſſarily pre-ſuppoſes particular Paſſions or Appetites; ſince the very Idea of Intereſt or Happineſs conſiſts in this, that an Appetite or Affection enjoys its Object. 'Tis not becauſe we love Ourſelves that we find Delight in ſuch and ſuch Objects, but becauſe we have particular Affections towards them.

them. Take away theſe Affections, and you leave Self-love abſolutely nothing at all to employ itſelf about *; no End or Object for it to purſue, excepting only that of avoiding Pain. Indeed the *Epicureans*, who maintain'd that Abſence of Pain, was the higheſt Happineſs, might, conſiſtently with themſelves, deny all Affection, and, if they had ſo pleaſed, every ſenſual Appetite too: But the very Idea of Intereſt or Happineſs other than Abſence of Pain, implies particular Appetites or Paſſions; theſe being neceſſary to conſtitute That Intereſt or Happineſs.

THE Obſervation that Benevolence is no more diſintereſted than any of the common particular Paſſions †, ſeems in itſelf worth being taken notice of; but is inſiſted upon to obviate that Scorn, which one ſees riſing upon the Faces of People who are ſaid to know the World, when Mention is made of a diſintereſted, generous or publick-ſpirited Action. The Truth of that Obſervation might be made appear, in a more formal Manner of Proof: For whoever will conſider all the poſſible Reſpects and Relations which any particular Affection can have to Self-love and private Intereſt, will, I think, ſee demonſtrably, that Benevolence is not in any Reſpect more at Variance with Self-love, than any other particular Affection

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* pag. 210. † p. 213, &c.

on whatever, but that it is in every Reſpect, at leaſt, as friendly to it.

If the Obſervation be true, it follows, that Self-love and Benevolence, Virtue and Intereſt are not to be oppoſed, but only to be diſtinguiſhed from each other; in the ſame Way as Virtue and any other particular Affection, Love of Arts, ſuppoſe, are to be diſtinguiſhed. Every thing is what it is, and not another thing. The Goodneſs or Badneſs of Actions does not ariſe from hence, that the Epithet, intereſted or diſintereſted, may be applied to them, any more than that any other indifferent Epithet, ſuppoſe inquiſitive or jealous may or may not be applied to them; not from their being attended with preſent or future Pleaſure or Pain; but from their being what they are: Namely, what becomes ſuch Creatures as we are, what the ſtate of the Caſe requires, or the contrary. Or in other Words, we may judge and determine, that an Action is morally Good or Evil, before we ſo much as conſider, whether it be intereſted or diſintereſted. This Conſideration no more comes in to determine, whether an Action be virtuous, than to determine whether it be reſentful. Self-love in its due Degree is as juſt and morally Good, as any Affection whatever. Benevolence towards particular Perſons may be to a Degree of Weakneſs,

and ſo be blameable: And Diſintereſtedneſs is ſo far from being in itſelf commendable, that the utmoſt poſſible Depravity, which we can in Imagination conceive, is that of diſintereſted Cruelty.

NEITHER does there appear any Reaſon to wiſh Self-love were weaker in the generality of the World, than it is. The Influence which it has, ſeems plainly owing to its being conſtant and habitual, which it cannot but be, and not to the Degree or Strength of it. Every Caprice of the Imagination, every Curioſity of the Underſtanding, every Affection of the Heart, is perpetually ſhewing its Weakneſs by prevailing over it. Men daily, hourly ſacrifice the greateſt known Intereſt, to Fancy, Inquiſitiveneſs, Love or Hatred, any vagrant Inclination. The Thing to be lamented is, not that Man have ſo great Regard to their own Good or Intereſt in the preſent World, for they have not enough *; but that they have ſo little to the Good of Others. And this ſeems plainly owing to their being ſo much engaged in the Gratification of particular Paſſions unfriendly to Benevolence, and which happen to be moſt prevalent in them, much more than to Self-love. As a Proof of this may be obſerved, that there is no Character more void of Friendſhip, Gratitude, natural Affecti-

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* Pag. 21.

on, Love to their Country, common Juſtice, or more equally and uniformly hard-hearted, than the *abandoned* in, what is called, the Way of Pleaſure——hard-hearted and totally without Feeling in Behalf of Others; except when they cannot eſcape the ſight of Diſtreſs, and ſo are interrupted by it in their Pleaſures. And yet 'tis ridiculous to call ſuch an abandoned Courſe of Pleaſure intereſted, when the Perſon engaged in it knows before-hand, and goes on under the Feeling and Apprehenſion, that 'twill be as ruinous [to himſelf, as to thoſe who depend upon him.

UPON the whole, if the generality of Mankind were to cultivate within themſelves the Principle of Self-love; if they were to accuſtom themſelves often to ſet down and conſider, what was the greateſt Happineſs they were capable of attaining for themſelves in this Life, and if Self-love were ſo ſtrong and prevalent, as that they would uniformly purſue this their ſuppoſed chief temporal Good, without being diverted from it by any particular Paſſion; it would manifeſtly prevent numberleſs Follies and Vices. This was in a great meaſure the *Epicurean* Syſtem of Philoſophy. 'Tis indeed by no Means the religious, or even moral Inſtitution of Life. Yet, with all the Miſtakes Men would fall into about Intereſt,

it would be leſs miſchievous, than the Extravagances of mere Appetite, Will and Pleaſure: For certainly Self-love, though confined to the Intereſt of this Life, is, of the two, a much better Guide than Paſſion *, which has abſolutely no Bound nor Meaſure, but what is ſet to it by this Self-love, or Moral Conſiderations.

FROM the Diſtinction above made between Self-love, and the ſeveral particular Principles or Affections in our Nature, we may ſee how good Ground there was for that Aſſertion, maintained by the ſeveral ancient *Schools* of Philoſophy, againſt the *Epicureans*, namely, that Virtue is to be purſued as an End, eligible in and for itſelf. For, if there be any Principles or Affections in the Mind of Man diſtinct from Self-love, that the Things thoſe Principles tend towards, or that the Objects of thoſe Affections are, each of them, in themſelves eligible, to be purſued upon its own Account, and to be reſted in as an End, is implied in the very Idea of ſuch Principle or Affection †. They indeed aſſerted much higher Things of Virtue, and with very good Reaſon; but to ſay thus much of it, that it is to be purſued for itſelf, is to ſay no more of it, than may truly be ſaid of the Object of every natural Affection whatever.

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* Pag. 39. † p. 265.

THE Queſtion, which was a few Years ago diſputed in *France* concerning *the Love of God*, which was there called Enthuſiaſm, as it will every where by the Generality of the World; this Queſtion I ſay, anſwers in *Religion*, to that old one in *Morals* now mentioned. And both of them are, I think, fully determined by the ſame Obſervation, namely, that the very Nature of Affection, the Idea itſelf, neceſſarily implies reſting in its Object as an End.

I SHALL not here add any thing further, to what I have ſaid in the two Diſcourſes upon that moſt important Subject, but only this: That if we are conſtituted ſuch ſort of Creatures, as from our very Nature, to feel certain Affections or Movements of Mind, upon the Sight or Contemplation of the meaneſt inanimate Part of the Creation, for the Flowers of the Field have their Beauty; certainly there muſt be ſomewhat due to Him Himſelf, who is the Author and Cauſe of all Things; who is more intimately preſent to us, than any thing elſe can be, and with whom we have a nearer and more conſtant Intercourſe, than we can have with any Creature: There muſt be ſome Movements of Mind and Heart which correſpond to his Perfections, or of which thoſe Perfections are the natural Object. And that when we

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are commanded to *love the Lord our God, with all our Heart, and with all our Mind, and with all our Soul*; ſomewhat more muſt be meant than merely, that we live in Hope of Rewards, or Fear of Puniſhments from Him; ſomewhat more than this muſt be intended: Though theſe Regards themſelves are moſt juſt and reaſonable, and abſolutely neceſſary to be often recollected, in ſuch a World as this.

It may be proper juſt to adverti ſe the Reader, that he is not to look for any particular Reaſon for the Choice of the greateſt part of theſe Diſcourſes; their being taken from amongſt many Others, preached in the ſame Place, through a Courſe of Eight Years, being in great Meaſure accidental. Neither is he to expect to find any other Connection between them, than that Uniformity of Thought and Deſign, which will always be found in the Writings of the ſame Perſon, when he writes with Simplicity and in Earneſt.

Stanhope, Sept. the 16th 1729.

CON-

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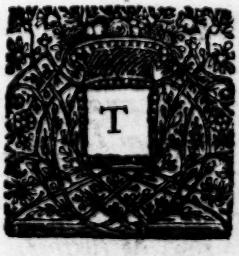
SERMON I.

Upon Humane Nature.

ROM. xii. 4, 5.

For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the ſame Office: So we being many are one Body in Chriſt, and every one Members one of another.



THE Epiſtles in the New Teſtament have all of them a particular Reference to the Condition and Uſages of the Chriſtian World at the Time they were written. Therefore as they cannot be thoroughly underſtood, unleſs that Condition and thoſe Uſages are known and attended to: SERM. I.

SERM. I. ſo further, though they be known, yet if they be diſcontinued or changed; Exhortations, Precepts, and Illuſtrations of things, which refer to ſuch Circumſtances now ceaſed or altered, cannot at this Time be urged in that Manner, and with that Force which they were to the Primitive Chriſtians. Thus the Text now before us, in its firſt Intent and Deſign, relates to the decent Management of thoſe extraordinary Gifts which were then in the Church *, but which are now totally ceaſed. And even as to the Alluſion that *we are one Body in Chriſt*; though what the Apoſtle here intends is equally true of Chriſtians in all Circumſtances; and the Conſideration of it is plainly ſtill an additional Motive, over and above moral Conſiderations, to the Diſcharge of the ſeveral Duties and Offices of a Chriſtian: Yet it is manifeſt this Alluſion muſt have appeared with much greater Force to thoſe, who by the many Difficulties they went through for the ſake of their Religion, were led to keep always in View the Relation they ſtood in to their Saviour, who had undergone the ſame; to thoſe, who from the Idolatries of all around them, and their ill Treatment,

* 1 Cor. xii.

ment, were taught to conſider themſelves as not of the World in which they lived, but as a diſtinct Society of themſelves; with Laws, and Ends, and Principles of Life and Action, quite contrary to thoſe which the World profeſs'd themſelves at that Time influenced by. Hence the Relation of a Chriſtian was by them conſidered as nearer than that of Affinity and Blood; and they almoſt literally eſteemed themſelves as Members one of another. SERM. I.

IT cannot indeed poſſibly be denied, that our being God's Creatures, and Virtue being the natural Law we are born under, and the whole Conſtitution of Man being plainly adapted to it, are prior Obligations to Piety and Virtue, than the Conſideration that God ſent his Son into the World to ſave it, and the Motives which ariſe from the peculiar Relation of Chriſtians, as Members one of another under Chriſt our Head. However, though all this be allowed, as it expreſly is by the inſpired Writers; yet 'tis manifeſt that Chriſtians at the Time of the Revelation, and immediately after, could not but inſiſt moſtly upon Conſiderations of this latter Kind.

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THESE Obſervations ſhow the original particular Reference of the Text; and the peculiar Force with which the Thing intended by the Alluſion in it muſt have been felt by the primitive Chriſtian World. They likewiſe afford a Reaſon for treating it at this Time in a more general Way.

THE Relation, which the ſeveral Parts or Members of the natural Body have to each other and to the whole Body, is here compared to the Relation which each particular Perſon in Society has to other particular Perſons and to the whole Society: And the latter is intended to be illuſtrated by the former. And if there be a Likeneſs between theſe two Relations, the Conſequence is obvious: that the latter ſhows us we were intended to do good to others, as the former ſhows us that the ſeveral Members of the natural Body were intended to be Inſtruments of Good to each other and to the whole Body. But as there is ſcarce any Ground for a Compariſon between Society and the mere material Body, this without the Mind being a dead unactive Thing; much leſs can the Compariſon be carried to any length. And ſince the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the ſeveral Members as having diſtinct Offices, which implies

plies the Mind; it cannot be thought an unallowable Liberty; inſtead of the *Body* and *its Members*, to ſubſtitute the *whole Nature of Man*, and *all the variety of internal Principles which belong to it.* And then the Compariſon will be between the Nature of Man as reſpecting Self, and tending to private Good, his own Preſervation and Happineſs; and the Nature of Man as having reſpect to Society, and tending to promote publick Good, the Happineſs of that Society. Theſe Ends do indeed perfectly coincide; and to aim at publick and private Good are ſo far from being inconſiſtent, that they mutually promote each other: Yet in the following Diſcourſe they muſt be conſidered as entirely diſtinct; otherwiſe the Nature of Man as tending to one, or as tending to the other, cannot be compared. There can no Compariſon be made, without conſidering the Things compared as diſtinct and different.

FROM this Review and Compariſon of the Nature of Man as reſpecting Self, and as reſpecting Society, it will plainly appear, that *there are as real and the ſame kind of Indications in Humane Nature, that we were made for Society and to do good to our Fel-*

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Firſt, There is a natural Principle of *Benevolence* * in Man; which is in ſome Degree to *Society,* what *Self-love* is to the *Individual.*

* Suppoſe a Man of Learning to be writing a grave Book upon *Humane Nature,* and to ſhew in ſeveral Parts of it that he had an Inſight into the Subject he was conſidering: Amongſt other things, the following one would require to be accounted for; The Appearance of Benevolence or Good-will in Men towards each other in the Inſtances of Natural Relation, and in others †. Cautious of being deceived with outward Show, he retires within himſelf to ſee exactly, what That is in the Mind of Man from whence this Appearance proceeds; and, upon deep Reflection, aſſerts the Principle in the Mind to be only the Love of Power, and Delight in the Exerciſe of it. Would not every Body think here was a Miſtake of one Word for another? That the Philoſopher was contemplating and accounting for ſome other *Humane Actions,* ſome other Behaviour of Man to Man? And could any one be thoroughly ſatisfied, that what is commonly called Benevolence or Good-will was really the Affection meant, but only by being made to underſtand that this Learned Perſon had a general Hypotheſis, to which the Appearance of Good-will could no otherwiſe be reconciled? That what has this Appearance is often nothing but Ambition; That Delight in Superiority often (ſuppoſe always) mixes itſelf with Benevolence, only makes it more ſpecious to call it Ambition than Hunger, of the two: But in reality that Paſſion does no more account for the whole Appearances of Good-will, than this Appetite does. Is there not often the Appearance of one Man's wiſhing that Good to Another,

dual. And if there be in Mankind any Diſpoſition to Friendſhip; If there be any ſuch thing as Compaſſion, for Compaſſion

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Another, which he knows himſelf unable to procure him; and rejoycing in it, though beſtowed by a third Perſon? And can Love of Power any way poſſibly come in to account for this Deſire or Delight? Is there not often the Appearance of Mens diſtinguiſhing between two or more Perſons, preferring one before another to do good to, in Caſes where Love of Power cannot in the leaſt account for the Diſtinction and Preference? For this Principle can no otherwiſe diſtinguiſh between Objects, than as it is a greater Inſtance and Exertion of Power to do good to one rather than to another. Again, Suppoſe Good-will in the Mind of Man to be nothing but Delight in the exerciſe of Power: Men might indeed be reſtrained by diſtant and accidental Conſiderations; but theſe Reſtraints being removed, they would have a Diſpoſition to, and Delight in Miſchief as an Exerciſe and Proof of Power: And this Diſpoſition and Delight would ariſe from or be the ſame Principle in the Mind, as a Diſpoſition to and Delight in Charity. Thus Cruelty, as diſtinct from Envy and Reſentment, would be exactly the ſame in the Mind of Man as Good-will: That one tends to the Happineſs, the other to the Miſery of our Fellow-Creatures, is it ſeems merely an accidental Circumſtance, which the Mind has not the leaſt Regard to. Theſe are the Abſurdities which even Men of Capacity run into, when they have occaſion to belie their Nature, and will preverſely diſclaim that Image of God which was originally ſtamped upon it; the Traces of which, however faint, are plainly diſcernible upon the Mind of Man. † *Hobbs* of Human Nature, *c.* 9. §. 17.

If any Perſon can in earneſt doubt, whether there be ſuch a thing as Good-will in one Man towards another; (for the Queſtion is not concerning either the Degree or Extenſiveneſs of it, but concerning the Affection itſelf;) let it be obſerved, that *Whether Man be thus or otherwiſe conſtituted, What is the inward*

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is momentary Love; if there be any ſuch thing as the paternal or filial Affections; if there be any Affection in Humane Nature, the Object and End of which is the Good of another; this is itſelf Benevolence, or the Love of another. Be it ever ſo ſhort, be it in ever ſo low a Degree, or ever ſo unhappily confined; it proves the Aſſertion, and

inward Frame in this Particular, is a mere Queſtion of Fact or natural Hiſtory, not proveable immediately by Reaſon. It is therefore to be judged of and determined in the ſame way other Facts or Matters of Natural Hiſtory are: By appealing to the external Senſes, or inward Perceptions, reſpectively, as the Matter under Conſideration is cognizable by one or the other: By arguing from acknowledged Facts and Actions; for a great Number of Actions of the ſame Kind, in different Circumſtances, and reſpecting different Objects, will prove, to a Certainty, what Principles they do not, and, to the greateſt Probability, what Principles they do proceed from: And laſtly, by the Teſtimony of Mankind. Now that there is ſome Degree of Benevolence amongſt Men, may be as ſtrongly and plainly proved in all theſe Ways, as it could poſſibly be proved, ſuppoſing there was this Affection in our Nature. And ſhould any one think fit to aſſert, that Reſentment in the Mind of Man was abſolutely nothing but reaſonable Concern for our own Safety; the Falſity of this, and what is the real Nature of that Paſſion, could be ſhewn in no other Ways than thoſe in which it may be ſhewn, that there is ſuch a thing in *ſome Degree* as *real* Good-will in Man towards Man. It is ſufficient that the Seeds of it be implanted in our Nature by God. There is, it is owned, much left for us to do upon our own Heart and Temper; to cultivate, to improve, to call it forth, to exerciſe it in a ſteady, uniform Manner. This is our Work: This is Virtue and Religion.

and points out what we were deſigned for, as really as though it were in a higher Degree and more extenſive. I muſt however remind you, that though Benevolence and Self-love are different; though the former tends moſt directly to publick Good, and the latter to private: Yet they are ſo perfectly coincident, that the greateſt Satisfactions to our ſelves depend upon our having Benevolence in a due Degree; and that Self-love is one chief Security of our right Behaviour towards Society. It may be added, that their mutual coinciding, ſo that we can ſcarce promote one without the other, is equally a Proof that we were made for both.

Secondly, THIS will further appear from obſerving that the *ſeveral Paſſions* and *Affections*, which are diſtinct * both from Benevolence

* Every Body makes a Diſtinction between Self-love, and the ſeveral particular Paſſions, Appetites, and Affections; and yet they are often confounded again. That they are totally different will be ſeen by any one who will diſtinguiſh between the Paſſions and Appetites *themſelves*, and *endeavouring* after the Means of their Gratification. Conſider the Appetite of Hunger, and the Deſire of Eſteem: Theſe being the Occaſion both of Pleaſure and Pain, the cooleſt *Self-love*, as well as the Appetites and Paſſions themſelves, may put us upon making Uſe of the *proper Methods of obtaining* that Pleaſure, and avoiding that

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nevolence and Self-love, do in general contribute and lead us to *publick* Good, as really as to *private*. It might be thought too minute and particular, and would carry us too great a length, to diſtinguiſh between and compare together the ſeveral Paſſions or Appetites diſtinct from Benevolence, whoſe primary

that Pain; but the *Feelings themſelves*, the Pain of Hunger and Shame, and the Delight from Eſteem, are no more Self-love than they are any thing in the World. Though a Man hated himſelf, he would as much feel the Pain of Hunger as he would that of the Gout: And it is plainly ſuppoſeable there may be Creatures with Self-love in them to the higheſt Degree, who may be quite inſenſible and indifferent (as Men in ſome Caſes are) to the Contempt and Eſteem of thoſe, upon whom their Happineſs does not in ſome further Reſpects depend. And as Self-love and the ſeveral particular Paſſions and Appetites are in themſelves totally different; ſo, that ſome Actions proceed from one, and ſome from the other, will be manifeſt to any who will obſerve the two following very ſuppoſeable Caſes. One Man ruſhes upon certain Ruin for the Gratification of a preſent Deſire: No Body will call the Principle of this Action Self love. Suppoſe another Man to go through ſome laborious Work upon Promiſe of a great Reward, without any diſtinct Knowledge what the Reward will be: This Courſe of Action cannot be aſcribed to any particular Paſſion. The former of theſe Actions is plainly to be imputed to ſome particular Paſſion or Affection, the latter as plainly to the general Affection or Principle of Self-love. That there are ſome particular Purſuits or Actions concerning which we cannot determine how far they are owing to one, and how far to the other, proceeds from this, that the two Principles are frequently mixt together, and run up into each other. This Diſtinction is further explained in the Eleventh Sermon.

primary Uſe and Intention is the Security and Good of Society; and the Paſſions diſtinct from Self-love, whoſe primary Intention and Deſign is the Security and Good of the Individual *. It is enough to the preſent Argument, that Deſire of Eſteem from others, Contempt and Eſteem of them, Love of Society as diſtinct from Affection to the Good of it, Indignation againſt ſucceſsful Vice, that theſe are publick Affections or Paſſions; have an immediate reſpect to others, naturally lead us to regulate our Behaviour in ſuch a Manner as will be of Service to our Fellow-Creatures. If any or all of theſe may be conſidered likewiſe as private Affections, as tending to private Good; this does not hinder them from being publick

* If any deſire to ſee this Diſtinction and Compariſon made in a particular Inſtance, the Appetite and Paſſion now mentioned may ſerve for one. Hunger is to be conſider'd as a private Appetite; becauſe the End for which it was given us is the Preſervation of the Individual. Deſire of Eſteem is a publick Paſſion; becauſe the End for which it was given us is to regulate our Behaviour towards Society. The reſpect which This has to private Good is as remote, as the reſpect That has to publick Good: And the Appetite is no more Self-love, than the Paſſion is Benevolence. The Object and End of the former is merely Food; the Object and End of the latter is merely Eſteem: But the latter can no more be gratified, without contributing to the Good of Society; than the former can be gratified, without contributing to the Preſervation of the Individual.

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lick Affections too, or deſtroy the good Influence of them upon Society, and their Tendency to publick Good. It may be added, that as Perſons without any Conviction from Reaſon of the deſirableneſs of Life, would yet of Courſe preſerve it merely from the Appetite of Hunger; ſo by acting merely from Regard (ſuppoſe) to Reputation, without any Conſideration of the Good of Others, Men often contribute to publick Good. In both theſe Inſtances they are plainly Inſtruments in the Hands of another, in the Hands of Providence, to carry on Ends, the Preſervation of the Individual and Good of Society, which they themſelves have not in their View or Intention. The Sum is, Men have various Appetites, Paſſions, and particular Affections, quite diſtinct both from Self-love, and from Benevolence: All of theſe have a tendency to promote both publick and private Good, and may be conſidered as reſpecting others and ourſelves equally and in common: But ſome of them ſeem moſt immediately to reſpect others, or tend to publick Good; others of them moſt immediately to reſpect Self, or tend to private Good: As the former are not Benevolence, ſo the latter are not

not Self-love: Neither Sort are Inſtances of our Love either to ourſelves or others; but only Inſtances of our Maker's Care and Love both of the Individual and the Species, and Proofs that he intended we ſhould be Inſtruments of Good to each other, as well as that we ſhould be ſo to our ſelves.

Thirdly, THERE is a Principle of Reflection in Men, by which they diſtinguiſh between, approve and diſapprove their own Actions. We are plainly conſtituted ſuch ſort of Creatures as to reflect upon our own Nature. The Mind can take a View of what paſſes within itſelf, its Propenſions, Averſions, Paſſions, Affections, as reſpecting ſuch Objects, and in ſuch Degrees; and of the ſeveral Actions conſequent thereupon. In this Survey it approves of one, diſapproves of another, and towards a third is affected in neither of theſe ways, but is quite indifferent. This Principle in Man, by which he approves or diſapproves his Heart, Temper, and Actions, is Conſcience; for this is the ſtrict Senſe of the Word, though ſometimes it is uſed ſo as to take in more. And that this Faculty tends to reſtrain Men from doing Miſchief to each other, and leads them to do good, is too manifeſt to need

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need being inſiſted upon. Thus a Parent has the Affection of Love to his Children: This leads him to take care of, to educate, to make due Proviſion for them; the natural Affection leads to this: But the Reflection that it is his proper Buſineſs, what belongs to him, that it is right and commendable ſo to do; this added to the Affection, becomes a much more ſettled Principle, and carries him on through more Labour and Difficulties for the ſake of his Children, than he would undergo from that Affection alone; if he thought it, and the Courſe of Action it led to, either indifferent or criminal. This indeed is impoſſible, to do that which is good and not to approve of it; for which reaſon they are frequently not conſidered as diſtinct, though they really are: For Men often approve of the Actions of others, which they will not imitate, and likewiſe do that which they approve not. It cannot poſſibly be denied that there is this Principle of Reflection or Conſcience in Humane Nature. Suppoſe a Man to relieve an innocent Perſon in great Diſtreſs; ſuppoſe the ſame Man afterwards, in the Fury of Anger, to do the greateſt Miſchief to a Perſon who had given no juſt Cauſe of Offence;

fence; to aggravate the Injury, add the Circumſtances of former Friendſhip, and Obligation from the injured Perſon; let the Man who is ſuppoſed to have done theſe two different Actions, cooly reflect upon them afterwards, without regard to their Conſequences to himſelf: To aſſert that any common Man would be affected in the ſame Way towards theſe different Actions, that he would make no Diſtinction between them, but approve or diſapprove them equally, is too glaring a Falſity to need being confuted. There is therefore this Principle of Reflection or Conſcience in Mankind. It is needleſs to compare the Reſpect it has to private Good, with the Reſpect it has to publick; ſince it plainly tends as much to the latter as to the former, and is commonly thought to tend chiefly to the latter. This Faculty is now mentioned merely as another Part in the inward Frame of Man, pointing out to us in ſome Degree what we are intended for, and as what will naturally and of courſe have ſome Influence. The particular Place aſſigned to it by Nature, what Authority it has, and how great Influence it ought to have, ſhall be hereafter conſidered.

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FROM this Compariſon of Benevolence and Self-love, of our publick and private Affections, of the Courſes of Life they lead to, and of the Principle of Reflection or Conſcience as reſpecting each of them, it is as manifeſt, that *we were made for Society, and to promote the Happineſs of it; as that we were intended to take Care of our own Life, and Health, and private Good.*

AND from this whole Review muſt be given a different Draught of Humane Nature from what we are often preſented with. Mankind are by Nature ſo cloſely united, there is ſuch a Correſpondence between the inward Senſations of one Man and thoſe of another, that Diſgrace is as much avoided as bodily Pain, and to be the Object of Eſteem and Love as much deſired as any external Goods: And in many particular Caſes, Perſons are carried on to do good to others, as the End their Affection tends to and reſts in; and manifeſt that they find real Satisfaction and Enjoyment in this Courſe of Behaviour. There is ſuch a natural Principle of Attraction in Man towards Man, that having trod the ſame Tract of Land, having breathed in the ſame Cli-

mate, barely having been born in the ſame artificial Diſtrict or Diviſion, becomes the Occaſion of contracting Acquaintances and Familiarities many Years after: For any thing may ſerve the Purpoſe. Thus Relations meerly nominal are ſought and invented, not by Governours, but by the loweſt of the People; which are found ſufficient to hold Mankind together in little Fraternities and Copartnerſhips: Weak ties indeed, and what may afford Fund enough for Ridicule, if they are abſurdly conſidered as the real Principles of that Union: But they are in Truth meerly the Occaſions, as any thing may be of any thing, upon which our Nature carries us on according to its own previous Bent and Bias; which Occaſions therefore would be nothing at all, were there not this prior Diſpoſition and Bias of Nature. Men are ſo much one Body, that in a peculiar Manner they feel for each other, Shame, ſudden Danger, Reſentment, Honour, Proſperity, Diſtreſs; one or another, or all of theſe, from the ſocial Nature in general, from Benevolence, upon the Occaſion of natural Relation, Acquaintance, Protection, Dependance; each of theſe being diſtinct Cements of Society. And therefore to have

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BUT allowing all this, it may be aſked, "Has not Man Diſpoſitions and Principles "within which lead him to do Evil to "others, as well as to do Good? Whence "come the many Miſeries elſe, which Men "are the Authors and Inſtruments of to "each other?" Theſe Queſtions, ſo far as they relate to the foregoing Diſcourſe, may be anſwered by aſking, Has not Man alſo Diſpoſitions and Principles within, which lead him to do Evil to himſelf, as well as good? Whence come the many Miſeries elſe, Sickneſs, Pain and Death, which Men are the Inſtruments and Authors of to themſelves?

IT may be thought more eaſie to anſwer one of theſe Queſtions than the other, but the Anſwer to both is really the ſame; that Mankind have ungoverned Paſſions which

which they will gratifie at any Rate, as well to the Injury of Others, as in Contradiction to known private Intereſt: But that as there is no ſuch thing as Self-hatred, ſo neither is there any ſuch thing as Ill-will in one Man towards another, Emulation and Reſentment being away; whereas there is plainly Benevolence or Good-will: There is no ſuch thing as Love of Injuſtice, Oppreſſion, Treachery, Ingratitude; but only eager Deſires after ſuch and ſuch external Goods; which, according to a very ancient Obſervation, the moſt abandoned would chooſe to obtain by innocent Means, if they were as eaſy, and as effectual to their End: That even Emulation and Reſentment, by any one who will conſider what theſe Paſſions really are in Nature *, will be found nothing to the Purpoſe of this Objection:

* Emulation is merely the Deſire and Hope of Equality with or Superiority over others, with whom we compare our ſelves. There does not appear to be any *other Grief* in the natural Paſſion, but only *that Want* which is implied in Deſire. However this may be ſo ſtrong as to be the Occaſion of great *Grief*. To deſire the attainment of this Equality or Superiority by the *particular Means* of Others, being brought down to our own Level, or below it, is, I think, the diſtinct Notion of Envy. From whence it is eaſy to ſee, that the real End, which the natural Paſſion Emulation, and which the unlawful

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jection: And that the Principles and Paſſions in the Mind of Man, which are diſtinct both from Self-love and Benevolence, primarily and moſt directly lead to right Behaviour with regard to Others as well as Himſelf, and only ſecondarily and accidentally to what is Evil. Thus, though Men to avoid the Shame of one Villany are ſometimes guilty of a greater, yet it is eaſy to ſee, that the original Tendency of Shame is to prevent the doing of ſhameful Actions; and its leading Men to conceal ſuch Actions when done, is only in conſequence of their being done; *i. e.* of the Paſſions not having anſwered its firſt End.

IF it be ſaid, that there are Perſons in the World, who are in great Meaſure without the natural Affections towards their Fellow-Creatures: There are likewiſe Inſtances of Perſons without the common natural Affections to themſelves: But the Nature of Man is not to be judged of by either of theſe, but by what appears in the common World, in the Bulk of Mankind.

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lawful one Envy aims at, is exactly the ſame; namely, that Equality or Superiority: And conſequently, that to do Miſchief is not the End of Envy, but meerly the Means it makes uſe of to attain its End. As to Reſentment, ſee the Eighth Sermon.

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I AM afraid it would be thought very ſtrange, if to confirm the Truth of this Account of Humane Nature, and make out the Juſtneſs of the foregoing Compariſon, it ſhould be added, that from what appears, Men in Fact as much and as often contradict that *Part* of their Nature which reſpects *Self*, and which leads them to their *own private* Good and Happineſs; as they contradict that *Part* of it which reſpects *Society*, and tends to *publick* Good: That there are as few Perſons, who attain the greateſt Satisfaction and Enjoyment which they might attain in the preſent World; as who do the greateſt Good to others which they might do: Nay, that there are as few who can be ſaid really and in earneſt to aim at one, as at the other. Take a Survey of Mankind: The World in general, the Good and Bad, almoſt without Exception, equally are agreed, that were Religion out of the Caſe, the Happineſs of the preſent Life would conſiſt in a Manner wholly in Riches, Honours, ſenſual Gratifications; inſomuch that one ſcarce hears a Reflection made upon Prudence, Life, Conduct, but upon this Suppoſition. Yet on the contrary, that Perſons in the greateſt Affluence of Fortune are no

SERM. I. happier than ſuch as have only a Competency; that the Cares and Diſappointments of Ambition for the moſt Part far exceed the Satisfactions of it; as alſo the miſerable Intervals of Intemperance and Exceſs, and the many untimely Deaths occaſioned by a diſſolute Courſe of Life: Theſe things are all ſeen, acknowledged, by every one acknowledged; but are thought no Objections againſt, though they expreſsly contradict, this univerſal Principle, that the Happineſs of the preſent Life conſiſts in one or other of them. Whence is all this Abſurdity and Contradiction? Is not the middle Way obvious? Can any thing be more manifeſt, than that the Happineſs of Life conſiſts in Theſe poſſeſſed and enjoyed only to a certain Degree; that to purſue them beyond this Degree, is always attended with more Inconvenience than Advantage to a Man's ſelf, and often with extream Miſery and Unhappineſs. Whence then, I ſay, is all this Abſurdity and Contradiction? Is it really the Reſult of Conſideration in Mankind, how they may become moſt eaſy to themſelves, moſt free from Care, and enjoy the chief Happineſs attainable in this World? Or is it not manifeſtly owing either to this, that they have not

not cool and reaſonable Concern enough for themſelves, to conſider wherein their chief Happineſs in the preſent Life conſiſts; or elſe, if they do conſider it, that they will not act conformably to what is the Reſult of that Conſideration: *i. e.* reaſonable Concern for themſelves, or cool Self-love is prevailed over by Paſſion and Appetite. So that from what appears, there is no Ground to aſſert that thoſe Principles in the Nature of Man, which moſt directly lead to promote the Good of our Fellow-Creatures, are more generally or in a greater Degree violated, than thoſe, which moſt directly lead us to promote our own private Good and Happineſs. SERM. I.

THE Sum of the whole is plainly this. The Nature of Man conſidered in his ſingle Capacity, and with reſpect only to the preſent World, is adapted and leads him to attain the greateſt Happineſs he can for himſelf in the preſent World. The Nature of Man conſidered in his publick or ſocial Capacity leads him to a right Behaviour in Society, to that Courſe of Life which we call Virtue. Men follow or obey their Nature in both theſe Capacities and Reſpects to a certain Degree, but not intirely: Their Acti-

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ons do not come up to the whole of what their Nature leads them to in either of these Capacities or Respects; and they often violate their Nature in both. *i. e.* As they neglect the Duties they owe to their Fellow-Creatures, to which their Nature leads them; and are injurious, to which their Nature is abhorrent: So there is a manifest Negligence in Men of their real Happiness or Interest in the present World, when that Interest is inconsistent with a present Gratification; for the sake of which they negligently, nay, even knowingly are the Authors and Instruments of their own Misery and Ruin. Thus they are as often unjust to themselves as to others, and for the most Part are equally so to both by the same Actions.

SERMON

SERMON II, III.

Upon Humane Nature.

ROM. ii. 14.

For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law, theſe having not the Law, are a Law unto themſelves.

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AS ſpeculative Truth admits of different Kinds of Proof, ſo likewiſe Moral Obligations may be ſhewn by different Methods. If the real Nature of any Creature leads him and is adapted to ſuch and ſuch Purpoſes only, or more than to any other; this is a Reaſon to believe the Author of that Nature intended it for thoſe Purpoſes. Thus there is no Doubt the Eye was intended for us to ſee with. And the more complex any Conſtitution is,

SERM. II. is, and the greater Variety of Parts there are which thus tend to ſome one End, the ſtronger is the Proof that ſuch End was deſigned. However, when the inward Frame of Man is conſidered as any Guide in Morals, the utmoſt Caution muſt be uſed that none make Peculiarities in their own Temper, or any thing which is the Effect of particular Cuſtoms, though obſervable in ſeveral, the Standard of what is common to the Species; and above all, that the higheſt Principle be not forgot or excluded, That to which belongs the Adjuſtment and Correction of all other inward Movements and Affections: Which Principle will of Courſe have ſome Influence, but which being in Nature ſupream, as ſhall now be ſhown, ought to preſide over and govern all the reſt. The Difficulty of rightly obſerving the two former Cautions; the Appearance there is of ſome ſmall Diverſity amongſt Mankind with reſpect to this Faculty, with reſpect to their natural Senſe of moral Good and Evil; and the Attention neceſſary to ſurvey with any Exactneſs what paſſes within, have occaſioned that it is not ſo much agreed what is the Standard of the internal Nature of Man, as of his external Form.

Form. Neither is this laſt exactly ſettled. Yet we underſtand one another when we ſpeak of the Shape of a Humane Body: So likewiſe we do when we ſpeak of the Heart and inward Principles, how far ſoever the Standard is from being exact or preciſely fixt. There is therefore Ground for an Attempt of ſhewing Men to themſelves, of ſhewing them what Courſe of Life and Behaviour their real Nature points out and would lead them to. Now Obligations of Virtue ſhown, and Motives to the Practice of it enforced, from a Review of the Nature of Man, are to be conſidered as an Appeal to each particular Perſon's Heart and natural Conſcience: As the external Senſes are appealed to for the Proof of things cognizable by them. Since then our inward Feelings, and the Perceptions we receive from our external Senſes are equally real; to argue from the former to Life and Conduct, is as little liable to Exception, as to argue from the latter to abſolute ſpeculative Truth. A Man can as little doubt whether his Eyes were given him to ſee with, as he can doubt of the Truth of the Science of *Opticks*, deduced from ocular Experiments. And allowing the inward Feeling, Shame;

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Shame; a Man can as little doubt whether it was given him to prevent his doing ſhameful Actions, as he can doubt whether his Eyes were given him to guide his Steps. And as to theſe inward Feelings themſelves; that they are real, that Man has in his Nature Paſſions and Affections, can no more be queſtioned, than that he has external Senſes. Neither can the former be wholly miſtaken; though to a certain Degree liable to greater Miſtakes than the latter.

THERE can be no doubt but that ſeveral Propenſions or Inſtincts, ſeveral Principles in the Heart of Man, carry him to Society, and to contribute to the Happineſs of it, in a Senſe and a Manner in which no inward Principle leads him to Evil. Theſe Principles, Propenſions or Inſtincts which lead him to do Good, are approved of by a certain Faculty within, quite diſtinct from theſe Propenſions themſelves. All this hath been fully made out in the foregoing Diſcourſe.

BUT it may be ſaid, "What is all this, "though true, to the Purpoſe of Virtue and "Religion? Theſe require, not only that "we do good to others when we are led "this Way, by Benevolence or Reflection, "happening to be ſtronger than other Prin-

"ciples,

" ciples, Paſſions, or Appetites; but like- SERM.
" wiſe that the *whole* Character be formed II.
" upon Thought and Reflection; that *eve-*
" *ry* Action be directed by ſome determi-
" nate Rule, ſome other Rule than the
" Strength and Prevalency of any Principle
" or Paſſion. What Sign is there in our
" Nature (for the Inquiry is only about what
" is to be collected from thence) that this
" was intended by its Author? Or how
" does ſo various and fickle a Temper as
" that of Man appear adapted thereto? It
" may indeed be abſurd and unnatural for
" Men to act without any Reflection; nay,
" without Regard to that particular Kind of
" Reflection which you call Conſcience;
" becauſe this does belong to our Nature.
" For as there never was a Man but who
" approved one Place, Proſpect, Building,
" before another: So it does not appear
" that there ever was a Man who would
" not have approved an Action of Huma-
" nity rather than of Cruelty; Intereſt and
" Paſſion being quite out of the Caſe. But
" Intereſt and Paſſion do come in, and are
" often too ſtrong for and prevail over Re-
" flection and Conſcience. Now as Brutes
" have various Inſtincts, by which they are
" carried

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" carried on to the End the Author of their " Nature intended them for: Is not Man " in the ſame Condition; with this Diffe- " rence only, that to his Inſtincts (*i. e.* Ap- " petites and Paſſions) is added the Princi- " ple of Reflection or Conſcience? And " as Brutes act agreeably to their Nature, in " following that Principle or particular In- " ſtinct which for the preſent is ſtrongeſt " in them: Does not Man likewiſe act a- " greeably to his Nature, or obey the Law " of his Creation, by following that Prin- " ciple, be it Paſſion or Conſcience, which " for the preſent happens to be ſtrongeſt in " him? Thus different Men are by their " particular Nature hurried on to purſue " Honour, or Riches, or Pleaſure: There " are alſo Perſons whoſe Temper leads them " in an uncommon Degree to Kindneſs, " Compaſſion, doing Good to their Fellow- " Creatures: As there are others who are " given to ſuſpend their Judgment, to weigh " and conſider Things, and to act upon " Thought and Reflection. Let every one " then quietly follow his Nature; as Paſſi- " on, Reflection, Appetite, the ſeveral Parts " of it, happen to be ſtrongeſt: But let " not the Man of Virtue take upon him

" to blame the Ambitious, the Covetous, " the Diſſolute; ſince theſe equally with " him obey and follow their Nature. Thus, " as in ſome Caſes we follow our Nature " in doing the Works *contained in the Law*, " ſo in other Caſes we follow Nature in " doing contrary.

Now all this licentious Talk intirely goes upon a Suppoſition, that Men follow their Nature in the ſame Senſe, in violating the known Rules of Juſtice and Honeſty for the ſake of a preſent Gratification, as they do in following thoſe Rules when they have no Temptation to the contrary. And if this were true, that could not be ſo which St. *Paul* aſſerts, that Men are *by Nature a Law to themſelves.* If by following Nature were meant only acting as we pleaſe, it would indeed be ridiculous to ſpeak of Nature as any Guide in Morals: Nay the very mention of deviating from Nature would be abſurd; and the mention of following it, when ſpoken by way of Diſtinction, would abſolutely have no Meaning. For did ever any one act otherwiſe than as he pleaſed? And yet the Antients ſpeak of deviating from Nature as Vice; and of following Nature ſo much as a Diſtinction, that according to them

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them the Perfection of Virtue conſiſts therein. So that Language itſelf ſhould teach People another Senſe to the Words *following Nature*, than barely acting as we pleaſe. Let it however be obſerved, that though the Words *Humane Nature* are to be explained, yet the real Queſtion of this Diſcourſe is not concerning the Meaning of Words, any otherwiſe than as the Explanation of them may be needful to make out and explain the Aſſertion, that *every Man is naturally a Law to himſelf*, that *every one may find within himſelf the Rule of Right, and Obligations to follow it.* This St. *Paul* affirms in the Words of the Text, and this the foregoing Objection really denies by ſeeming to allow it. And the Objection will be fully anſwered, and the Text before us explained, by obſerving that *Nature* is conſidered in different Views, and the Word uſed in different Senſes; and by ſhewing in what View it is conſidered, and in what Senſe the Word is uſed, when intended to expreſs and ſignify that which is the Guide of Life, that by which Men are a Law to themſelves. I ſay, the Explanation of the Term will be ſufficient, becauſe from thence it will appear, that in

ſome Senſes of the Word, *Nature* cannot be, but that in another Senſe it manifeſtly is, a Law to us. SERM. II.

I. BY *Nature* is often meant no more than ſome Principle in Man, without regard either to the Kind or Degree of it. Thus the Paſſion of Anger, and the Affection of Parents to their Children, would be called equally *natural.* And as the ſame Perſon hath often contrary Principles, which at the ſame Time draw contrary Ways, he may by the ſame Action both follow and contradict his Nature in this Senſe of the Word; he may follow one Paſſion and contradict another.

II. *Nature* is frequently ſpoken of as conſiſting in thoſe Paſſions which are ſtrongeſt, and moſt influence the Actions; which being vicious ones, Mankind is in this Senſe naturally vicious, or vicious by Nature. Thus St. *Paul* ſays of the *Gentiles, who were dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, and walked according to the Spirit of Diſobedience,* that *they were by Nature the Children of Wrath* *. They could be no otherwiſe *Children of Wrath* by Nature, than they were vicious by Nature.

* Epheſ. ii. 3.

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HERE then are two different Senſes of the Word *Nature*, in neither of which Men can at all be ſaid to be a Law to themſelves. They are mentioned only to be excluded; to prevent their being confounded, as the latter is in the Objection, with another Senſe of it, which is now to be inquired after, and explained.

III. THE Apoſtle aſſerts, that *the Gentiles do by NATURE the things contained in the Law.* Nature is indeed here put by way of Diſtinction from Revelation, but yet it is not a mere Negative. He intends to expreſs more than that by which they *did not*, that by which they *did* the Works of the Law; namely, by *Nature*. It is plain the meaning of the Word is not the ſame in this Paſſage as in the former, where it is ſpoken of as Evil; for in this latter it is ſpoken of as Good; as that by which they acted, or might have acted virtuouſly. What that is in Man by which he is *naturally a Law to himſelf*, is explained in the following Words: *Which ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſciences alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another.* If there be a Diſtinction

tinction to be made between the *Works written in their Hearts*, and the *Witneſs of Conſcience*; by the former muſt be meant the natural Diſpoſition to Kindneſs and Compaſſion, to do what is of good Report, to which this Apoſtle often refers: That Part of the Nature of Man, treated of in the foregoing Diſcourſe, which with very little Reflection and of Courſe leads him to Society, and by means of which he naturally acts a juſt and good Part in it, unleſs other Paſſions or Intereſt lead him aſtray. Yet ſince other Paſſions, and Regards to private Intereſt, which lead us (though indirectly, yet they lead us) aſtray, are themſelves in a Degree equally natural, and often moſt prevalent; and ſince we have no Method of ſeeing the particular Degrees in which one or the other is placed in us by Nature; it is plain the former, conſidered meerly as natural, good and right as they are, can no more be a Law to us than the latter. But there is a ſuperior Principle of Reflection or Conſcience in every Man, which diſtinguiſhes between the internal Principles of his Heart, as well as his external Actions: Which paſſes Judgment upon himſelf and them; pronounces determinate-

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ly ſome Actions to be in themſelves juſt, right, good; others to be in themſelves evil, wrong, unjuſt: Which, without being conſulted, without being adviſed with, magiſterially exerts itſelf, and approves or condemns Him the doer of them accordingly: And which, if not forcibly ſtopp'd, naturally and always of Courſe goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual Sentence, which ſhall hereafter ſecond and affirm its own. But this Part of the Office of Conſcience is beyond my preſent Deſign explicitely to conſider. It is by this Faculty, natural to Man, that he is a moral Agent, that he is a Law to himſelf: By this Faculty, I ſay, not to be conſidered meerly as a Principle in his Heart, which is to have ſome Influence as well as others; but conſidered as a Faculty in Kind and in Nature ſupream over all others, and which bears its own Authority of being ſo.

THIS *Prerogative*, this *natural Supremacy*, of the Faculty which ſurveys, approves or diſapproves the ſeveral Affections of our Mind, and Actions of our Lives, being that by which Men *are a Law to themſelves*, their Conformity or Diſobedience to which Law of our Nature renders their

Actions, in the higheſt and moſt proper Senſe, natural or unnatural; it is fit it be further explained to you: And I hope it will be ſo, if you will attend to the following Reflections. SERM. II.

MAN may act according to that Principle or Inclination which for the preſent happens to be ſtrongeſt, and yet act in a Way diſproportionate to, and violate his real proper Nature. Suppoſe a brute Creature by any Bait to be allured into a Snare, by which he is deſtroyed. He plainly followed the Bent of his Nature, leading him to gratify his Appetite: There is an entire Correſpondence between his whole Nature and ſuch an Action: Such Action therefore is natural. But ſuppoſe a Man, foreſeeing the ſame Danger of certain Ruin, ſhould ruſh into it for the ſake of a preſent Gratification. He in this Inſtance would follow his ſtrongeſt Deſire, as did the brute Creature: But there would be as manifeſt a Diſproportion, between the Nature of a Man and ſuch an Action, as between the meaneſt Work of Art and the Skill of the greateſt Maſter in that Art: Which Diſproportion ariſes, not from conſidering the Action ſingly in *itſelf*, or in its *Conſequences*; but from *Compariſon* of

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it with the Nature of the Agent. And ſince ſuch an Action is utterly diſproportionate to the Nature of Man, it is in the ſtricteſt and moſt proper Senſe unnatural; this Word expreſſing that Diſproportion. Therefore inſtead of the Words *Diſproportionate to his Nature*, the Word, *Unnatural*, may now be put; this being more familiar to us: But let it be obſerved, that it ſtands for the ſame thing preciſely.

Now what is it which renders ſuch a raſh Action unnatural? Is it that he went againſt the Principle of reaſonable and cool Self-love, conſidered *meerly* as a Part of his Nature? No: For if he had acted the contrary Way, he would equally have gone againſt a Principle or Part of his Nature, namely, Paſſion or Appetite. But to deny a preſent Appetite, from Foreſight that the Gratification of it would end in immediate Ruin or extream Miſery, is by no Means an unnatural Action: Whereas to contradict or go againſt cool Self-love for the ſake of ſuch Gratification, is ſo in the Inſtance before us. Such an Action then being unnatural; and its being ſo not ariſing from a Man's going againſt a Principle or Deſire barely, nor in going againſt that Principle or Deſire which happens

happens for the preſent to be ſtrongeſt; it neceſſarily follows, that there muſt be ſome other Difference or Diſtinction to be made between theſe two Principles, Paſſion and cool Self-love, than what I have yet taken Notice of. And this Difference, not being a Difference in Strength or Degree, I call a Difference in *Nature* and in *Kind.* And ſince, in the Inſtance ſtill before us, if Paſſion prevails over Self-love, the conſequent Action is unnatural; but if Self-love prevails over Paſſion, the Action is natural: It is manifeſt that Self-love is in Humane Nature a ſuperiour Principle to Paſſion. This may be contradicted without violating that Nature; but the former cannot. So that, if we will act conformably to the Oeconomy of Man's Nature, reaſonable Self-love muſt govern. Thus, without particular Conſideration of Conſcience, we may have a clear Conception of the *ſuperiour Nature* of one inward Principle to another; and ſee that there really is this natural Superiority, quite diſtinct from Degrees of Strength and Prevalency. SERM. II.

LET us now take a View of the Nature of Man, as conſiſting partly of various Appetites, Paſſions, Affections, and partly of

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the Principle of Reflection or Conſcience; leaving quite out all Conſideration of the different Degrees of Strength, in which either of them prevail, and it will further appear that there is this natural Superiority of one inward Principle to another, and that it is even Part of the Idea of Reflection or Conſcience.

PASSION or Appetite implies a direct ſimple Tendency towards ſuch and ſuch Objects, without Diſtinction of the Means by which they are to be obtained. Conſequently 'twill often happen there will be a Deſire of particular Objects, in Caſes where they cannot be obtained without manifeſt Injury to others. Reflection or Conſcience comes in, and diſapproves the Purſuit of them in theſe Circumſtances; but the Deſire remains. Which is to be obeyed, Appetite or Reflection? Cannot this Queſtion be anſwered from the Oeconomy and Conſtitution of Humane Nature meerly, without ſaying which is ſtrongeſt? Or need this at all come into Conſideration? Would not the Queſtion be *intelligibly* and fully anſwered by ſaying, that the Principle of Reflection or Conſcience being compared with the various Appetites, Paſſions, and Affections

Affections in Men, the former is manifeſtly ſuperiour and chief, without regard to Strength? And how often ſoever the latter happens to prevail, it is meer *Uſurpation*: The former remains in Nature and in Kind its Superiour; and every Inſtance of ſuch Prevalence of the latter is an Inſtance of breaking in upon and Violation of the Conſtitution of Man. SERM. II.

ALL this is no more than the Diſtinction, which every Body is acquainted with, between *meer Power* and *Authority*: Only, inſtead of being intended to expreſs the Difference between what is poſſible, and what is lawful in Civil Government; here it has been ſhewn applicable to the ſeveral Principles in the Mind of Man. Thus that Principle, by which we ſurvey, and either approve or diſapprove our own Heart, Temper and Actions, is not only to be conſidered as what is in its turn to have ſome Influence; which may be ſaid of every Paſſion, of the loweſt Appetites: But likewiſe as being ſuperiour; as from its very Nature manifeſtly claiming Superiority over all others: inſomuch that you cannot form a Notion of this Faculty, Conſcience, without taking in Judgment, Direction, Super-

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Superintendency. This is a conſtituent Part of the Idea, that is, of the Faculty itſelf: And, to preſide and govern, from the very Oeconomy and Conſtitution of Man, belongs to it. Had it Strength, as it has Right; had it Power, as it has manifeſt Authority; it would abſolutely govern the World.

THIS gives us a further View of the Nature of Man; ſhews us what Courſe of Life we were made for: Not only that our real Nature leads us to be influenced in ſome Degree by Reflection and Conſcience; but likewiſe in what Degree we are to be influenced by it, if we will fall in with, and act agreeably to the Conſtitution of our Nature: That this Faculty was placed within to be our proper Governour; to direct and regulate all under Principles, Paſſions, and Motives of Action. This is its Right and Office: Thus ſacred is its Authority. And how often ſoever Men violate and rebelliouſly refuſe to ſubmit to it, for ſuppoſed Intereſt which they cannot otherwiſe obtain, or for the ſake of Paſſion which they cannot otherwiſe gratify; this makes no Alteration as to the *natural Right* and *Office* of Conſcience.

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LET us now turn this whole Matter another way, and ſuppoſe there was no ſuch thing at all as this natural Supremacy of Conſcience; that there was no Diſtinction to be made between one inward Principle and another, but only that of Strength; and ſee what would be the Conſequence.

CONSIDER then what is the Latitude and Compaſs of the Actions of Man with regard to Himſelf, his Fellow-Creatures and the Supream Being? What are their Bounds, beſides that of our natural Power? With reſpect to the two firſt, they are plainly no other than theſe: No Man ſeeks Miſery as ſuch for himſelf; and No one unprovoked does Miſchief to Another for its own ſake. For in every Degree within theſe Bounds, Mankind knowingly from Paſſion or Wantonneſs bring Ruin and Miſery upon themſelves and others. And Impiety and Prophaneneſs, I mean, what every one would call ſo who believes the Being of God, have abſolutely no Bounds at all. Men blaſpheme the Author of Nature, formally and in Words renounce their Allegiance to their Creator. Put an Inſtance then with reſpect to any one of theſe three. Though we ſhould ſuppoſe prophane Swearing, and in general that

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that Kind of Impiety now mentioned, to mean nothing, yet it implies wanton Diſregard and Irreverence towards an Infinite Being our Creator; and is this as ſuitable to the Nature of Man, as Reverence and Dutiful Submiſſion of Heart towards that Almighty Being? Or ſuppoſe a Man guilty of Parricide, with all the Circumſtances of Cruelty which ſuch an Action can admit of. This Action is done in Conſequence of its Principle being for the preſent ſtrongeſt: And if there be no Difference between inward Principles, but only that of Strength; the Strength being given, you have the whole Nature of the Man given ſo far as it relates to this Matter. The Action plainly correſponds to the Principle, the Principle being in that Degree of Strength it was: It therefore correſponds to the whole Nature of the Man. Upon comparing the Action and the whole Nature, there ariſes no Diſproportion, their appears no unſuitableneſs between them. Thus the *Murder of a Father* and the *Nature of Man* correſpond to each other, as the ſame Nature and an act of filial Duty. If there be no Difference between inward Principles, but only that of Strength; we can make no Diſtinction between

tween theſe two Actions, conſidered as the Actions of ſuch a Creature; but in our cooleſt Hours muſt approve or diſapprove them equally: Than which nothing can be reduced to a greater Abſurdity. SERM. II.

THE natural Supremacy of Reflection or Conſcience being thus eſtabliſhed; we may from it form a diſtinct Notion of what is meant by *Humane Nature*, when Virtue is ſaid to conſiſt in following it, and Vice in deviating from it. SERM. III.

AS the Idea of a Civil Conſtitution implies in it united Strength, various Subordinations, under one Direction, that of the ſupream Authority; the different Strength of each particular Member of the Society not coming into the Idea; whereas, if you leave out the Subordination, the Union and the one Direction, you deſtroy and loſe it: So Reaſon, ſeveral Appetites, Paſſions and Affections, prevailing in different Degrees of Strength, is not *that* Idea or Notion of *Humane Nature*; but *that Nature* conſiſts in theſe ſeveral Principles conſidered as having a natural Reſpect to each other, in the ſeveral Paſſions being naturally ſubordi-

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nate to the one ſuperior Principle of Reflection or Conſcience. Every Bias, Inſtinct, Propenſion within, is a real Part of our Nature, but not the Whole: Add to theſe the ſuperior Faculty, whoſe Office it is to adjuſt, manage and preſide over them, and take in this its natural Superiority, and you compleat the Idea of Humane Nature. And as in Civil Government the Conſtitution is broken in upon and violated by Power and Strength prevailing over Authority; ſo the Conſtitution of Man is broken in upon and violated by the lower Faculties or Principles within prevailing over that which is in its Nature ſupream over them all. Thus, when it is ſaid by ancient Writers, that Tortures and Death are not ſo contrary to Humane Nature as Injuſtice; by this to be ſure is not meant, that the Averſion to the former in Mankind is leſs ſtrong and prevalent than their Averſion to the latter: But that the former is only contrary to our Nature conſidered in a partial View, and which takes in only the loweſt Part of it, that which we have in common with the Brutes; whereas the latter is contrary to our Nature, conſidered in a higher Senſe, as a Syſtem

Syſtem and Conſtitution, contrary to the whole Oeconomy of Man *. SERM. III.

AND

* Every Man in his phyſical Nature is one individual ſingle Agent. He has likewiſe Properties and Principles, each of which may be conſidered ſeparately, and without Regard to the Reſpects which they have to each other. Neither of theſe are the Nature we are taking a View of. But it is the inward Frame of Man conſidered as a *Syſtem* or *Conſtitution:* Whoſe ſeveral Parts are united, not by a phyſical Principle of Individuation, but by the Reſpects they have to each other; the chief of which is the Subjection which the Appetites, Paſſions, and particular Affections have to the one ſupream Principle of Reflection or Conſcience. The Syſtem or Conſtitution is formed by and conſiſts in theſe Reſpects and this Subjection. Thus the Body is a *Syſtem* or *Conſtitution:* So is a Tree: So is every Machine. Conſider all the ſeveral Parts of a Tree without the natural Reſpects they have to each other, and you have not at all the Idea of a Tree; but add theſe Reſpects, and this gives you the Idea. The Body may be impaired by Sickneſs, a Tree may decay, a Machine be out of Order, and yet the Syſtem and Conſtitution of them not totally diſſolved. There is plainly ſomewhat which anſwers to all this in the moral Conſtitution of Man. Whoever will conſider his own Nature, will ſee that the ſeveral Appetites, Paſſions, and particular Affections, have different Reſpects amongſt themſelves. They are Reſtraints upon, and are in a Proportion to each other. This Proportion is juſt and perfect, when all thoſe under Principles are perfectly coincident with Conſcience, ſo far as their Nature permits, and in all Caſes under its abſolute and intire Direction. The leaſt Exceſs or Defect, the leaſt Alteration of the due Proportions amongſt themſelves, or of their Co-incidence with Conſcience, though not proceeding into Action, is ſome Degree of Diſorder in the moral Conſtitution. But Perfection, though plainly intelligible and ſuppoſeable, was never attained by any Man. If the higher Principle of Reflection maintains its Place, and as much

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AND from all theſe things put together, nothing can be more evident, than that, excluſive of Revelation, Man cannot be conſidered as a Creature left by his Maker to act at random, and live at large up to the Extent of his natural Power, as Paſſion, Humour, Wilfulneſs, happen to carry him; which is the Condition brute Creatures are in: But that *from his Make, Conſtitution, or Nature, he is in the ſtricteſt and moſt proper Senſe a Law to himſelf.* He hath the Rule of Right within: What is wanting is only that he honeſtly attend to it.

THE Inquiries which have been made by Men of Leiſure after ſome general Rule, the Conformity to, or Diſagreement from which, ſhould denominate our Actions Good or Evil, are in many Reſpects of great Service. Yet let any plain honeſt Man, before he engages in any Courſe of Action, aſk himſelf, Is this I am going about Right, or is

as it can corrects that Diſorder, and hinders it from breaking out into Action, this is all that can be expected in ſuch a Creature as Man. And though the Appetites and Paſſions have not their exact due Proportion to each other; though they often ſtrive for Maſtery with Judgment or Reflection; yet, ſince the Superiority of this Principle to all others is the chief Reſpect which forms the Conſtitution, ſo far as this Superiority is maintained, the Character, the Man, is good, worthy, virtuous.

is it Wrong? Is it Good, or is it Evil? I do not in the leaſt doubt but that this Queſtion would be anſwered agreeably to Truth and Virtue, by almoſt any fair Man in almoſt any Circumſtance. Neither do there appear any Caſes which look like Exceptions to this; but thoſe of Superſtition, and of Partiality to ourſelves. Superſtition may perhaps be ſomewhat of an Exception: But Partiality to ourſelves is not; this being itſelf Diſhoneſty. For a Man to judge that to be the equitable, the moderate, the right Part for him to act, which he would ſee to be hard, unjuſt, oppreſſive in another; this is plain Vice, and can proceed only from great Unfairneſs of Mind. SERM. III.

BUT allowing that Mankind hath the Rule of Right within himſelf, yet it may be aſked, "What Obligations are we under to "attend to and follow it?" I anſwer: It has been proved that Man by his Nature is a Law to himſelf, without the particular diſtinct Conſideration of the poſitive Sanctions of that Law; the Rewards and Puniſhments which we feel, and thoſe which from the Light of Reaſon we have ground to believe, are annext to it. The Queſtion then carries its own Anſwer along with it. Your Obli-

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gation to obey this Law, is its being the Law of your Nature. That your Conſcience approves of and atteſts to ſuch a Courſe of Action, is itſelf alone an Obligation. Conſcience does not only offer itſelf to ſhew us the Way we ſhould walk in, but it likewiſe carries its own Authority with it, that it is our natural Guide; the Guide aſſigned us by the Author of our Nature: It therefore belongs to our Condition of Being, it is our Duty, to walk in that Path and follow this Guide without looking about to ſee whether we may not poſſibly forſake them with Impunity.

HOWEVER, let us hear what is to be ſaid againſt obeying this Law of our Nature. And the Sum is no more than this. "Why "ſhould we be concerned about any thing "out of and beyond ourſelves? If we do "find within Ourſelves Regards to Others, "and Reſtraints of we know not how ma-"ny different Kinds; yet, theſe being Em-"baraſſments, and hindering us from going "the neareſt Way to our own Good, why "ſhould we not endeavour to ſuppreſs and "get over them?".

THUS People go on with Words, which, when applied to Humane Nature, and the Condition

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Condition in which it is placed in this World, have really no Meaning. For does not all this kind of Talk go upon Suppoſition, that our Happineſs in this World conſiſts in ſomewhat quite diſtinct from Regards to others; and that it is the Priviledge of Vice to be without Reſtraint or Confinement? Whereas on the contrary, the Enjoyments, in a Manner all the common Enjoyments of Life, even the Pleaſures of Vice, depend upon theſe Regards of one Kind or another to our Fellow-Creatures. Throw off all Regards to others, and we ſhould be quite indifferent to Infamy and to Honour; there could be no ſuch thing at all as Ambition; and ſcarce any ſuch thing as Covetouſneſs; for we ſhould likewiſe be equally indifferent to the Diſgrace of Poverty, the ſeveral Neglects and Kinds of Contempt which accompany this State; and to the Reputation of Riches, the Regard and Reſpect they uſually procure. Neither is Reſtraint by any means peculiar to one Courſe of Life: But our very Nature, excluſive of Conſcience, and our Condition lays us under an abſolute Neceſſity of it. We cannot gain any End whatever without being confined to the proper Means, which

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is often the moſt painful and uneaſy Confinement. And in numberleſs Inſtances a preſent Appetite cannot be gratified without ſuch apparent and immediate Ruin and Miſery, that the moſt diſſolute Man in the World chooſes to forego the Pleaſure, rather than endure the Pain.

Is the Meaning then, to indulge thoſe Regards to our Fellow-Creatures, and ſubmit to thoſe Reſtraints, which upon the whole are attended with more Satisfaction than Uneaſineſs, and get over only thoſe which bring more Uneaſineſs and Inconvenience than Satisfaction? "Doubtleſs this "was our Meaning." You have changed Sides then. Keep to this; be conſiſtent with yourſelves; and you and the Men of Virtue are *in general* perfectly agreed. But let us take Care and avoid Miſtakes. Let it not be taken for granted that the Temper of Envy, Rage, Reſentment, yields greater Delight than Meekneſs, Forgiveneſs, Compaſſion, and Good-will: Eſpecially when it is acknowledged that Rage, Envy, Reſentment, are in themſelves meer Miſery; and the Satisfaction ariſing from the Indulgence of them is little more than Relief from that Miſery; whereas the Temper of Compaſſion

Compaſſion and Benevolence is itſelf de- SERM. III.
lightful; and the Indulgence of it, by doing Good, affords new poſitive Delight and Enjoyment. Let it not be taken for granted, that the Satisfaction ariſing from the Reputation of Riches and Power however obtained, and from the Reſpect paid to them, is greater than the Satisfaction ariſing from the Reputation of Juſtice, Honeſty, Charity, and the Eſteem which is univerſally acknowledged to be their due. And if it be doubtful which of theſe Satisfactions is the greateſt, as there are Perſons who think neither of them very conſiderable, yet there can be no doubt concerning Ambition and Covetouſneſs, Virtue and a good Mind, conſidered in themſelves, and as leading to different Courſes of Life; there can, I ſay, be no doubt, which Temper and which Courſe is attended with moſt Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, which with moſt Perplexity, Vexation and Inconvenience. And both the Virtues and Vices which have been now mentioned, do in a Manner equally imply in them Regards of one kind or another to our Fellow-Creatures. And with reſpect to Reſtraint and Confinement: Whoever will conſider the Reſtraints from Fear and

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Shame, the Diſſimulation, mean Arts of Concealment, ſervile Compliances, one or other of which belong to almoſt every Courſe of Vice; will ſoon be convinced that the Man of Virtue is by no Means upon a Diſadvantage in this Reſpect. How many Inſtances are there in which Men feel and own and cry aloud under the Chains of Vice with which they are enthrall'd, and which yet they will not ſhake off? How many Inſtances, in which Perſons manifeſtly go through more Pains and Self-denial to gratify a vitious Paſſion, than would have been neceſſary to the Conqueſt of it? To this is to be added, that when Virtue is become habitual, when the Temper of it is acquir'd, what was before Confinement ceaſes to be ſo, by becoming Choice and Delight. Whatever Reſtraint and Guard upon ourſelves may be needful to unlearn any unnatural Diſtortion or odd Geſture; yet, in all Propriety of Speech, natural Behaviour muſt be the moſt eaſy and unreſtrained. It is manifeſt that, in the common Courſe of Life, there is ſeldom any Inconſiſtency between our Duty and what is *called* Intereſt: It is much ſeldomer that there is an Inconſiſtency between Duty and what is really our

our preſent Intereſt; meaning by Intereſt, Happineſs and Satisfaction. Self-love then, though confined to the Intereſt of the preſent World, does in general perfectly coincide with Virtue; and leads us to one and the ſame Courſe of Life. But, whatever Exceptions there are to this, which are much fewer than they are commonly thought, all ſhall be ſet right at the final Diſtribution of things. It is a manifeſt Abſurdity to ſuppoſe Evil prevailing finally over Good, under the Conduct and Adminiſtration of a perfect Mind. SERM. III.

THE whole Argument, which I have been now inſiſting upon, may be thus ſummed up and given you in one View. The Nature of Man is adapted to ſome Courſe of Action or other. Upon comparing ſome Actions with this Nature, they appear ſuitable and correſpondent to it: From Compariſon of other Actions with the ſame Nature, there ariſes to our View ſome Unſuitableneſs or Diſproportion. The Correſpondence of Actions to the Nature of the Agent renders them natural: Their Diſproportion to it, unnatural. That an Action is correſpondent to the Nature of the Agent, does not ariſe from its being agreea-

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ble to the Principle which happens to be the ſtrongeſt: For it may be ſo, and yet be quite diſproportionate to the Nature of the Agent. The Correſpondence therefore, or Diſproportion, ariſes from ſomewhat elſe. This can be nothing but a Difference in Nature and Kind (altogether diſtinct from Strength) between the inward Principles. Some then are in Nature and Kind ſuperior to others. And the Correſpondence ariſes from the Action being conformable to the higher Principle; and the Unſuitableneſs, from its being contrary to it. Reaſonable Self-love and Conſcience are the chief or ſuperiour Principles in the Nature of Man: Becauſe an Action may be ſuitable to this Nature, though all other Principles be violated; but becomes unſuitable, if either of thoſe are. Conſcience and Self-love, if we underſtand our true Happineſs, always lead us the ſame Way. Duty and Intereſt are perfectly coincident; for the moſt Part in this World, but intirely and in every Inſtance, if we take in the future, and the whole; this being implied in the Notion of a good and perfect Adminiſtration of things. Thus they who have been ſo wiſe in their Generation as to regard only their

own ſuppoſed Intereſt, at the Expence and to the Injury of others, ſhall at laſt find, that he who has given up all the Advantages of the preſent World, rather than violate his Conſcience and the Relations of Life, has infinitely better provided for himſelf, and ſecured his own Intereſt and Happineſs. SERM. III.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

Upon the Government of the Tongue.

JAMES i. 26.

If any Man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, this Man's Religion is vain.

THE Tranſlation of this Text would be more determinate by being more literal, thus: *If any Man among you ſeemeth to be religious, not bridling his Tongue, but deceiving his own Heart, this Man's Religion is vain.* This determines that the Words, *but deceiveth his own Heart*, are not put in Oppoſition to, *ſeemeth to be religious*, but to, *bridleth not his Tongue.*

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Tongue. The certain determinate Meaning of the Text then being, that he who ſeemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but in that particular deceiveth his own Heart, this Man's Religion is vain; we may obſerve ſomewhat very forcible and expreſſive in theſe Words of St. *James.* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, No Man ſurely can make any Pretences to Religion, who does not at leaſt believe that he bridleth his Tongue: If he puts on any Appearance or Face of Religion, and yet does not govern his Tongue, he muſt ſurely deceive himſelf in that particular, and think he does: And whoever is ſo unhappy as to deceive himſelf in this, to imagine he keeps that unruly Faculty in due Subjection, when indeed he does not, whatever the other Part of his Life be, his Religion is vain; the Government of the Tongue being a moſt material Reſtraint which Virtue lays us under: Without it no man can be truly religious.

IN treating upon this Subject, I will conſider,

Firſt, WHAT is the general Vice or Fault here referred to: Or what Diſpoſition in Men is ſuppoſed in Moral Reflections and Precepts concerning *bridling the Tongue.*

Secondly,

Secondly, WHEN it may be ſaid of any one, that he has a due Government over himſelf in this reſpect. SERM. IV.

I. NOW the Fault referred to, and the Diſpoſition ſuppoſed, in Precepts and Reflections concerning the Government of the Tongue, is not Evil-ſpeaking from Malice, nor Lying or bearing falſe Witneſs from indirect ſelfiſh Deſigns. The Diſpoſition to theſe, and the actual Vices themſelves, all come under other Subjects. The Tongue may be employed about and made to ſerve all the Purpoſes of Vice, in tempting and deceiving, in Perjury and Injuſtice. But the Thing here ſuppoſed and referred to, is Talkativeneſs: A Diſpoſition to be talking, abſtracted from the Conſideration of what is to be ſaid; with very little or no Regard to, or Thought of doing, either Good or Harm. And let not any imagine this to be a ſlight Matter, and that it deſerves not to have ſo great Weight laid upon it; till he has conſidered, what Evil is implied in it, and the bad Effects which follow from it. It is perhaps true, that they who are addicted to this Folly would chooſe to confine themſelves to Trifles and indifferent Subjects, and ſo intend only to be guilty of being impertinent:

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nent: But as they cannot go on for ever talking of Nothing, as common Matters will not afford a ſufficient Fund for perpetual continued Diſcourſe: when Subjects of this Kind are exhauſted, they will go on to Defamation, Scandal, divulging of Secrets, their own Secrets as well as thoſe of others, any thing rather than be ſilent. They are plainly hurried on in the Heat of their Talk to ſay quite different Things from what they firſt intended, and which they afterwards wiſh unſaid; or improper things, which they had no other End in ſaying but only to afford Employment to their Tongue. And if theſe People expect to be heard and regarded, for there are ſome content meerly with talking, they will invent to engage your Attention: and, when they have heard the leaſt imperfect Hint of an Affair, they will out of their own Head add the Circumſtances of Time and Place, and other Matters to make out their Story, and give the Appearance of Probability to it: Not that they have any Concern about being believed, otherwiſe than as a Means of being heard. The thing is, to engage your Attention; to take you up wholly for the preſent Time: What Reflections will be made afterwards,

afterwards, is in Truth the leaſt of their Thoughts. And further; when Perſons, who indulge themſelves in theſe Liberties of the Tongue, are in any Degree offended with another, as little Diſguſts and Miſunderſtandings will be, they allow themſelves to defame and revile ſuch an one without any Moderation or Bounds; though the Offence is ſo very ſlight, that they themſelves would not do, nor perhaps wiſh him an Injury in any other way. And in this Caſe the Scandal and Revilings are chiefly owing to Talkativeneſs, and not bridling their Tongue; and ſo come under our preſent Subject. The leaſt Occaſion in the World will make the Humour break out in this particular Way, or in another. It is like a Torrent, which muſt and will flow; but the leaſt thing imaginable will firſt of all give it either this or another Direction, turn it into this or that Channel: Or like a Fire; the Nature of which, when in a Heap of combuſtible Matter, is to ſpread and lay waſte all around; but any one of a thouſand little Accidents will occaſion it to break out firſt either in this or another particular Part.

THE Subject then before us, though it does run up into, and can ſcarce be treated

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ed as intirely distinct from all others; yet it needs not be so much mixed or blended with them as it often is. Every Faculty and Power may be used as the Instrument of premeditated Vice and Wickedness, meerly as the most proper and effectual Means of executing such Designs. But if a Man, from deep Malice and Desire of Revenge, should meditate a Falshood with a setled Design to ruin his Neighbour's Reputation, and should with great Coolness and Deliberation spread it; no-body would choose to say of such an one, that he had no Government of his Tongue. A Man may use the Faculty of Speech as an Instrument of False-witness, who yet has so intire a Command over that Faculty, as never to speak but from Forethought and cool Design. Here the Crime is Injustice and Perjury: and, strictly speaking, no more belongs to the present Subject, than Perjury and Injustice in any other way. But there is such a thing as a Disposition to be talking for its own sake; from which Persons often say any thing, good or bad, of others, meerly as a Subject of Discourse, according to the particular Temper they themselves happen to be in, and to pass away the present

ſent Time. There is likewiſe to be obſerved in Perſons ſuch a ſtrong and eager Deſire of engaging Attention to what they ſay, that they will ſpeak Good or Evil, Truth or otherwiſe, meerly as one or the other ſeems to be moſt hearkened to: And this, though it is ſometimes joined, is not the ſame with the Deſire of being thought important and Men of Conſequence. There is in ſome ſuch a Diſpoſition to be talking, that an Offence of the ſlighteſt Kind, and ſuch as would not raiſe any other Reſentment, yet raiſes, if I may ſo ſpeak, the Reſentment of the Tongue, puts it into a Flame, into the moſt ungovernable Motions. This Outrage, when the Perſon it reſpects is preſent, we diſtinguiſh in the lower Rank of People by a peculiar Term: And let it be obſerved, that though the Decencies of Behaviour are a little kept; the ſame Outrage and Virulence, indulged when he is abſent, is an Offence of the ſame Kind. But not to diſtinguiſh any further in this Manner: Men run into Faults and Follies, which cannot ſo properly be referred to any one general Head as this, that they have not a due Government over their Tongue. SERM. IV.

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AND this unreſtrained Volubility and Wantonneſs of Speech is the Occaſion of numberleſs Evils and Vexations in Life. It begets Reſentment in him who is the Subject of it; ſows the Seed of Strife and Diſſenſion amongſt others; and inflames little Diſguſts and Offences, which if let alone would wear away of themſelves: It is often of as bad Effect upon the good Name of others, as deep Envy or Malice: And, to ſay the leaſt of it in this Reſpect, it deſtroys and perverts a certain Equity of the utmoſt Importance to Society to be obſerved; namely, that Praiſe and Diſpraiſe, a good or bad Character, ſhould always be beſtowed according to Deſert. The Tongue uſed in ſuch a licentious Manner is like a Sword in the Hand of a Madman; it is employed at random, it can ſcarce poſſibly do any Good, and for the moſt Part does a World of Miſchief; and implies not only great Folly and a trifling Spirit, but great Vitiouſneſs of Mind, great Indifference to Truth and Falſity, and to the Reputation, Welfare, and Good of others. So much Reaſon is there for what St. *James* ſays of the Tongue, * *It is a Fire, a World of Iniquity, it defileth the whole Body,*

* Chap. iii. v. 6.

Body, ſetteth on Fire the Courſe of Nature, and is itſelf ſet on Fire of Hell. This is the Faculty or Diſpoſition which we are required to keep a Guard upon: Theſe are the Vices and Follies it runs into, when not kept under due Reſtraint.

II. WHEREIN the due Government of the Tongue conſiſts, or when it may be ſaid of any one in a moral and religious Senſe that he *bridleth his Tongue*, I come now to conſider.

THE due and proper Uſe of any natural Faculty or Power, is to be judged of by the End and Deſign for which it was given us. The chief Purpoſe, for which the Faculty of Speech was given to Man, is plainly that we might communicate our Thoughts to each other, in order to carry on the Affairs of the World; for Buſineſs, and for our Improvement in Knowledge and Learning. But the good Author of our Nature deſigned us not only Neceſſaries, but likewiſe Enjoyment and Satisfaction, in that Being he hath graciouſly given, and in that Condition of Life he hath placed us in. There are ſecondary Uſes of our Faculties: They adminiſter to Delight, as well as to Neceſſity: And as they are equally adapted

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to both, there is no Doubt but he intended them for our Gratification, as well as for the Support and Continuance of our Being. The ſecondary Uſe of Speech is to pleaſe and be entertaining to each other in Converſation. This is in every Reſpect allowable and right: It unites Men cloſer in Alliances and Friendſhips; gives us a Fellow-feeling of the Proſperity and Unhappineſs of each other; and is in ſeveral Reſpects ſerviceable to Virtue, and to promote good Behaviour in the World. And provided there be not too much Time ſpent in it, if it were conſidered only in the Way of Gratification and Delight, Men muſt have ſtrange Notions of God and of Religion, to think that He can be offended with it, or that it is any way inconſiſtent with the ſtricteſt Virtue. But the Truth is, ſuch ſort of Converſation, though it has no particular good Tendency, yet it has a general Good one: It is ſocial and friendly; and tends to promote Humanity, Good-nature and Civility.

As the End and Uſe, ſo likewiſe the Abuſe of Speech, relates to the one or other of Theſe; either to Buſineſs, or to Converſation. As to the former; Deceit in the Management of Buſineſs and Affairs does not

not properly belong to the Subject now before us: Though one may just mention that Multitude, that endless number of Words, with which Business is perplexed; when a much fewer would, as it should seem, better serve the Purpose: But this must be left to those who understand the Matter. The Government of the Tongue, considered as a Subject of itself, relates chiefly to Conversation; to that Kind of Discourse which usually fills up the Time spent in friendly Meetings, and Visits of Civility. And the Danger is, lest Persons entertain themselves and others at the Expence of their Wisdom and their Virtue, and to the Injury or Offence of their Neighbour. If they will observe and keep clear of These, they may be as free, and easy, and unreserved, as they can desire.

THE Cautions to be given for avoiding these Dangers, and to render Conversation innocent and agreeable, fall under the following Particulars: Silence; Talking of indifferent things; and, which makes up too great a Part of Conversation, Giving of Characters, Speaking well or evil of others.

THE wise Man observes, that *there is a Time to speak, and a Time to keep silence.*

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One meets with People in the World, who ſeem never to have made the laſt of theſe Obſervations. And yet theſe great Talkers do not at all ſpeak from their having any thing to ſay, as every Sentence ſhews, but only from their Inclination to be talking. Their Converſation is merely an Exerciſe of the Tongue: No other humane Faculty has any Share in it. It is ſtrange theſe Perſons can help reflecting, that unleſs they have in Truth a ſuperiour Capacity, and are in an extraordinary Manner furniſhed for Converſation; if they are entertaining, it is at their own Expence. Is it poſſible, that it ſhould never come into Peoples Thoughts to ſuſpect, whether or no it be to their Advantage to ſhew ſo very much of themſelves? *O that you would altogether hold your Peace, and it ſhould be your Wiſdom* *. Remember likewiſe there are Perſons who love fewer Words, an inoffenſive Sort of People, and who deſerve ſome Regard, though of too ſtill and compoſed Tempers for you. Of this Number was the Son of *Sirach*: For he plainly ſpeaks from Experience, when he ſays, *As Hills of Sand are to the Steps of the Aged, ſo is one of many*

* Job xiii.

ny Words to a quiet Man. But one would think it ſhould be obvious to every one, that when they are in Company with their Superiours of any Kind, in Years, Knowledge and Experience; when proper and uſeful Subjects are diſcourſed of, which they cannot bear a Part in; that theſe are Times for Silence: when they ſhould learn to hear, and be attentive; at leaſt in their turn. It is indeed a very unhappy Way theſe People are in: They in a Manner cut themſelves out from all Advantage of Converſation, except that of being entertained with their own Talk: Their Buſineſs in coming into Company not being at all to be informed, to hear, to learn; but to diſplay themſelves; or rather to exert their Faculty, and talk without any Deſign at all. And if we conſider Converſation as an Entertainment, as ſomewhat to unbend the Mind; as a Diverſion from the Cares, the Buſineſs, and the Sorrows of Life; it is of the very Nature of it, that the Diſcourſe be mutual. This, I ſay, is implied in the very Notion of what we diſtinguiſh by Converſation, or being in Company. Attention to the continued Diſcourſe of one alone grows more painful often, than the Cares and Buſineſs we come to be diverted

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from. He therefore who impoſes this upon us, is guilty of a double Offence; arbitrarily enjoining Silence upon all the reſt, and likewiſe obliging them to this painful Attention.

I AM ſenſible theſe things are apt to be paſſed over, as too little to come into a ſerious Diſcourſe: But in reality Men are obliged, even in Point of Morality and Virtue, to obſerve all the Decencies of Behaviour. The greateſt Evils in Life have had their Riſe from ſomewhat, which was thought of too little Importance to be attended to. And as to the Matter we are now upon, it is abſolutely neceſſary to be conſidered. For if People will not maintain a due Government over themſelves, in regarding proper Times and Seaſons for Silence, but *will* be talking; they certainly, whether they deſign it or not at firſt, will go on to Scandal and Evil-ſpeaking, and divulging Secrets.

IF it were needful to ſay any thing further, to perſuade Men to learn this Leſſon of Silence; one might put them in Mind, how inſignificant they render themſelves by this exceſſive Talkativeneſs: inſomuch that, if they do chance to ſay any thing which deſerves to be attended to and regarded, it is loſt

loſt in the Variety and Abundance which they utter of another Sort. SERM. IV.

THE Occaſions of Silence then are obvious, and one would think ſhould be eaſily diſtinguiſhed by every Body: Namely, when a Man has nothing to ſay; or nothing, but what is better unſaid: Better, either in regard to the particular Perſons he is preſent with; or from its being an Interruption to Converſation itſelf; or to Converſation of a more agreeable Kind; or better, laſtly, with regard to himſelf. I will end this Particular with two Reflections of the wiſe Man: One of which, in the ſtrongeſt Manner, expoſes the ridiculous Part of this Licentiouſneſs of the Tongue; and the other, the great Danger and Viciouſneſs of it. *When he that is a Fool walketh by the Way Side, his Wiſdom faileth him, and he ſaith to every one that he is a Fool* *. The other is, *In the multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin.* †.

AS to the Government of the Tongue in reſpect to talking upon indifferent Subjects: After what has been ſaid concerning the due Government of it in reſpect to the Occaſions and Times for Silence, there is little more neceſſary,

* Eccleſ. x. 3. † Prov. x. 19.

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neceſſary, than only to caution Men to be fully ſatisfied, that the Subjects are indeed of an indifferent Nature; and not to ſpend too much Time in Converſation of this Kind. But Perſons muſt be ſure to take heed, that the Subject of their Diſcourſe be at leaſt of an indifferent Nature: That it be no way offenſive to Virtue, Religion, or good Manners; that it be not of a licentious diſſolute Sort, this leaving always ill Impreſſions upon the Mind; that it be no way injurious or vexatious to others; and that too much Time be not ſpent this way, to the neglect of thoſe Duties and Offices of Life which belong to their Station and Condition in the World. However, though there is not any Neceſſity, that Men ſhould aim at being important and weighty in every Sentence they ſpeak: Yet ſince uſeful Subjects, at leaſt of ſome Kinds, are as entertaining as others; a wiſe Man, even when he deſires to unbend his Mind from Buſineſs, would chooſe that the Converſation might turn upon ſomewhat inſtructive.

THE laſt Thing is, The Government of the Tongue as relating to Diſcourſe of the Affairs of others, and giving of Characters. Theſe are in a Manner the ſame: And one can

can ſcarce call it an indifferent Subject, be- SERM. cauſe Diſcourſe upon it almoſt perpetually IV. runs into ſomewhat criminal.

AND firſt of all, it were very much to be wiſhed that this did not take up ſo great a Part of Converſation; becauſe it is indeed a Subject of a dangerous Nature. Let any one conſider the various Intereſts, Competitions, and little Miſunderſtandings which ariſe amongſt Men; and he will ſoon ſee, that he is not unprejudiced and impartial, that he is not, as I may ſpeak, neutral enough, to truſt himſelf with talking of the Character and Concerns of his Neighbour, in a free, careleſs, and unreſerved Manner. There is perpetually, and often it is not attended to, a Rivalſhip amongſt People of one kind or another, in reſpect to Wit, Beauty, Learning, Fortune; and that one Thing will inſenſibly influence them to ſpeak to the Diſadvantage of others, even where there is no formed Malice or ill Deſign. Since therefore it is ſo hard to enter into this Subject without offending; the firſt thing to be obſerved is, that People ſhould learn to decline it; to get over that ſtrong Inclination moſt have to be talking of the Concerns and Behaviour of their Neighbour.

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BUT ſince it is impoſſible that this Subject ſhould be wholly excluded Converſation; and ſince it is neceſſary that the Characters of Men ſhould be known: The next thing is, that it is a Matter of Importance what is ſaid; and therefore, that we ſhould be religiouſly ſcrupulous and exact to ſay nothing, either good or bad, but what is true. I put it thus, becauſe it is in reality of as great Importance to the good of Society, that the Characters of bad Men ſhould be known, as that the Characters of good Men ſhould. People, who are given to Scandal and Detraction, may indeed make an ill uſe of this Obſervation: But Truths, which are of Service towards regulating our Conduct, are not to be diſowned, or even concealed, becauſe a bad Uſe may be made of them. This however would be effectually prevented, if theſe two things were attended to. *Firſt*, That, though it is equally of bad Conſequence to Society, that Men ſhould have either good or ill Characters which they do not deſerve; yet, when you ſay ſomewhat Good of a Man which he does not deſerve, there is no wrong done him in particular; whereas, when you ſay evil of a Man which he does not deſerve, here is a direct formal Injury,

jury, a real Piece of Injuſtice, done Him. This therefore makes a wide Difference; and gives us, in Point of Virtue, much greater Latitude in ſpeaking well, than ill, of Others. SERM. IV.

Secondly, A good Man is friendly to his Fellow-creatures, and a Lover of Mankind; and ſo will, upon every Occaſion, and often without any, ſay all the Good he can of every Body: But, ſo far as he is a good Man, will never be diſpoſed to ſpeak Evil of any, unleſs there be ſome other Reaſon for it, beſides barely that it is true. If he be charged with having given an ill Character, he will ſcarce think it a ſufficient Juſtification of himſelf to ſay it was a true one; unleſs he can alſo give ſome farther Account how he came to do ſo: A juſt Indignation againſt particular Inſtances of Villany, where they are great and ſcandalous; or to prevent an innocent Man from being deceived and betray'd, when he has great Truſt and Confidence in one who does not deſerve it. Juſtice muſt be done to every Part of a Subject, when we are conſidering it. If there be a Man, who bears a fair Character in the World, whom yet we know to be without Faith or Honeſty, to be really an ill Man; it muſt be allowed in general, that

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we ſhall do a Piece of Service to Society, by letting ſuch an one's true Character be known. This is no more, than what we have an Inſtance of in our Saviour himſelf; * though he was mild and gentle beyond Example. However, no Words can expreſs too ſtrongly the Caution which ſhould be uſed in ſuch a Caſe as this.

UPON the whole Matter: If People would obſerve the obvious Occaſions of Silence; if they would ſubdue the Inclination to Tale-bearing; and that eager Deſire to engage Attention, which is an Original Diſeaſe in ſome Minds; they would be in little Danger of offending with their Tongue; and would, in a moral and religious Senſe, have due Government over it.

I WILL conclude with ſome Precepts and Reflections of the Son of *Sirach* upon this Subject. *Be ſwift to hear: and, if thou haſt Underſtanding, anſwer thy Neighbour; if not, lay thy Hand upon thy Mouth. Honour and Shame is in Talk. A Man of an ill Tongue is dangerous in his City, and he that is raſh in his Talk ſhall be hated. A wiſe Man will hold his Tongue, till he ſee Opportunity; but a Babler and a Fool will*

* Mark xii. 38, 40.

will regard no Time. He that uſeth many Words ſhall be abhorred; and he that taketh to himſelf Authority therein, ſhall be hated. A back-biting Tongue hath diſquieted many; ſtrong Cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the Houſes of great Men. The Tongue of a Man is his fall; but if thou love to hear, thou ſhalt receive Underſtanding.

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Upon Compaſſion.

ROM. xii. 15.

Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and weep with them that weep.

EVERY Man is to be conſidered in two Capacities, the Private and Publick; as deſigned to purſue his own Intereſt, and likewiſe to contribute to the Good of others. Whoever will conſider, may ſee, that in general there is no Contrariety between theſe; but that from the original Conſtitution of Man, and the Circumſtances he is placed in, they perfectly coincide, and mutually carry on each other. But, amongſt the great Variety of Affections or Principles of Action in our Nature, ſome in their primary Intention and Deſign ſeem to belong to the ſingle or pri-

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OF

* There being manifeſtly this Appearance of Men's ſubſtituting Others for Themſelves, and being carried out and affected towards them as towards themſelves; ſome Perſons, who have a Syſtem which excludes every Affection to this Sort, have taken a pleaſant Method to ſolve it; and tell you it is *not Another* you are at all concerned about, but your *ſelf only*, when you feel the Affection called Compaſſion, *i. e.* Here is a plain Matter of Fact, which Men cannot reconcile with the general Account they think fit to give of things: They therefore, inſtead of *that* manifeſt Fact, ſubſtitute *another*, which is reconcileable to their own Scheme. For does not every

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OF theſe two, Delight in the Proſperity of others and Compaſſion for their Diſtreſſes,

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every Body by Compaſſion mean, an Affection the Object of which is Another in Diſtreſs? Inſtead of this, but deſigning to have it miſtaken for this, they ſpeak of an Affection or Paſſion, the Object of which is Ourſelves, or Danger to ourſelves. *Hobbs* defines *Pity, Imagination, or Fiction of future Calamity to ourſelves, proceeding from the Senſe* (he means Sight or Knowledge) *of another Man's Calamity.* Thus Fear and Compaſſion would be the ſame Idea, and a fearful and a compaſſionate Man the ſame Character, which every one immediately ſees are totally different. Further, to thoſe who give any Scope to their Affections, there is no Perception or inward Feeling more univerſal than this: that one who, has been merciful and compaſſionate throughout the Courſe of his Behaviour, ſhould himſelf be treated with Kindneſs, if he happens to fall into Circumſtances of Diſtreſs. Is Fear then or Cowardice ſo great a Recommendation to the Favour of the Bulk of Mankind? Or is it not plain, that meer Fearleſſneſs (and therefore not the contrary) is one of the moſt popular Qualifications? This ſhews that Mankind are not affected towards Compaſſion as Fear, but as ſomewhat totally different.

Nothing would more expoſe ſuch Accounts as theſe of the Affections which are favourable and friendly to our Fellow-Creatures, than to ſubſtitute the Definitions which this Author, and others who follow his Steps, give of ſuch Affections, inſtead of the Words by which they are commonly expreſſed. *Hobbs*, after having laid down that Pity or Compaſſion is only Fear for ourſelves, goes on to explain the Reaſon why we pity our Friends in Diſtreſs more than Others. Now ſubſtitute the *Definition* inſtead of the Word *Pity* in this Place, and the Inquiry will be, why we fear our Friends, *&c.* which Words (ſince he really does not mean why we are afraid of them) make no Queſtion or Sentence at all. So that common Language, the Words *to Compaſſionate, to Pity*, cannot be accommodated to his Account of Compaſſion. The very join-

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the laſt is felt much more generally than the former. Though Men do not univerſally

ing of the Words to *Pity our Friends*, is a direct Contradiction to his Definition of Pity: Becauſe thoſe Words ſo joined, neceſſarily expreſs that our Friends are the Objects of the Paſſion; whereas his Definition of it aſſerts, that Ourſelves (or Danger to Ourſelves) are the only Objects of it. He might indeed have avoided this Abſurdity, by plainly ſaying what he is going to account for; namely, why the Sight of the Innocent, or of our Friends in Diſtreſs, raiſes greater Fear for ourſelves than the Sight of other Perſons in Diſtreſs. But had he put the thing thus plainly, the Fact itſelf would have been doubted; that *the Sight of our Friends in Diſtreſs raiſes in us greater Fear for ourſelves, than the Sight of others in Diſtreſs.* And in the next Place it would immediately have occurred to every one, that the Fact now mentioned, which at leaſt is *doubtful*, whether true or falſe, was not the ſame with this Fact, which no-body ever doubted, that *the Sight of our Friends in Diſtreſs raiſes in us greater Compaſſion than the Sight of Others in Diſtreſs*: Every one, I ſay, would have ſeen that theſe are not the *ſame*, but *two different* Inquiries; and conſequently, that Fear and Compaſſion are not the ſame. Spppoſe a Perſon to be in real Danger, and by ſome Means or other to have forgot it; any trifling Accident, any Sound might alarm him, recall the Danger to his Remembrance, and renew his Fear: But it is almoſt too groſly ridiculous (though it is to ſhow an Abſurdity) to ſpeak of that Sound or Accident as an Object of Compaſſion; and yet according to Mr. *Hobbs*, our greateſt Friend in Diſtreſs is no more to us, no more the Object of Compaſſion or of any Affection in our Heart: Neither the one or the other raiſes any Emotion in our Mind, but only the Thoughts of our Liableneſs to Calamity, and the Fear of it; and both equally do this. It is fit ſuch ſort of Accounts of Humane Nature ſhould be ſhown to be what they really are, becauſe there is raiſed upon them a general Scheme which undermines

ſally rejoyce with all whom they ſee re- SERM. V.
joyce, yet, accidental Obſtacles removed, they naturally compaſſionate all in ſome

undermines the whole Foundation of common Juſtice and Honeſty. See *Hobbs of Hum. Nat.* c. 9. §. 10.

There are often three diſtinct Perceptions or inward Feelings upon Sight of Perſons in Diſtreſs: Real Sorrow and Concern for the Miſery of our Fellow-creatures; ſome Degree of Satisfaction from a Conſciouſneſs of our Freedom from that Miſery; and, as the Mind paſſes on from one thing to another, it is not unnatural from ſuch an Occaſion to reflect upon our own Liableneſs to the ſame or other Calamities. The two laſt frequently accompany the firſt, but it is the firſt *only* which is properly Compaſſion, of which the Diſtreſſed are the Objects, and which directly carries us with Calmneſs and Thought to their Aſſiſtance. Any one of theſe, from various and complicated Reaſons, may in particular Caſes prevail over the other two; and there are, I ſuppoſe, Inſtances where the bare *Sight* of Diſtreſs, without our feeling any Compaſſion for it, may be the Occaſion of either or both of the two latter Perceptions. One might add, that if there be really any ſuch thing as the Fiction or Imagination of Danger to ourſelves from Sight of the Miſeries of others, which *Hobbs* ſpeaks of, and which he has abſurdly miſtaken for the whole of Compaſſion; if there be any thing of this Sort common to Mankind, diſtinct from the Reflection of Reaſon, it would be a moſt remarkable Inſtance of what was furtheſt from his Thoughts, namely, of a mutual Sympathy between each Particular of the Species, a Fellow-feeling common to Mankind. It would not indeed be an Example of our ſubſtituting Others for Ourſelves, but it would be an Example of our ſubſtituting Ourſelves for Others. And as it would not be an Inſtance of Benevolence, ſo neither would it be any Inſtance of Self-love: For this Phantom of Danger to Ourſelves, naturally riſing to View upon Sight of the Diſtreſſes of Others, would be no more an Inſtance of Love to Ourſelves, than the Pain of Hunger is.

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Degree whom they ſee in Diſtreſs, ſo far as they have any real Perception or Senſe of that Diſtreſs: Inſomuch that Words expreſſing this latter, Pity, Compaſſion, frequently occur; whereas we have ſcarce any ſingle one, by which the former is diſtinctly expreſs'd. Congratulation indeed anſwers Condoleance: But both theſe Words are intended to ſignify certain Forms of Civility, rather than any inward Senſation or Feeling. This Difference or Inequality is ſo remarkable, that we plainly conſider Compaſſion as itſelf an original, diſtinct, particular Affection in Humane Nature; whereas to rejoyce in the Good of others, is only a Conſequence of the general Affection of Love and Good-will to them. The Reaſon and Account of which Matter is this. When a Man has obtained any particular Advantage or Felicity, his End is gained; and he does not in that particular want the Aſſiſtance of another: There was therefore no need of a diſtinct Affection towards that Felicity of another already obtained; neither would ſuch Affection directly carry him on to do Good to that Perſon: Whereas Men in Diſtreſs want Aſſiſtance; and Compaſſion leads us directly to aſſiſt them.

them. The Object of the former is the preſent Felicity of another; the Object of the latter is the preſent Miſery of another: It is eaſy to ſee that the latter wants a particular Affection for its Relief, and that the former does not want one, becauſe it does not want Aſſiſtance. And upon Suppoſition of a diſtinct Affection in both Caſes, the one muſt reſt in the Exerciſe of itſelf, having nothing further to gain; the other does not reſt in itſelf, but carries us on to aſſiſt the Diſtreſſed. SERM. V.

BUT, ſuppoſing theſe Affections natural to the Mind, particularly the laſt; "Has not "each Man Troubles enough of his own? "muſt he indulge an Affection which appro- "priates to himſelf thoſe of others? which "leads him to contract the leaſt deſirable of "all Friendſhips, Friendſhips with the Un- "fortunate? Muſt we invert the known "Rule of Prudence, and chooſe to aſſoci- "ate ourſelves with the Diſtreſſed? Or al- "lowing that we ought, ſo far as it is in our "Power, to relieve them; yet is it not bet- "ter to do this from Reaſon and Duty? Does "not Paſſion and Affection of every Kind "perpetually miſlead us? Nay, is not Paſ- "ſion and Affection itſelf a Weakneſs, and

SERM. V. "what a perfect Being must be entirely free "from?" Perhaps so: But it is Mankind I am speaking of; imperfect Creatures, and who naturally and, from the Condition we are placed in, necessarily depend upon each other. With respect to such Creatures, it would be found of as bad Consequence to eradicate all natural Affections, as to be intirely governed by them. This would almost sink us to the Condition of Brutes; and That would leave us without a sufficient Principle of Action. Reason alone, whatever any one may wish, is not in Reality a sufficient Motive of Virtue in such a Creature as Man; but this Reason joined with those Affections which God has impress'd upon his Heart: And when These are allowed Scope to exercise themselves, but under strict Government and Direction of Reason; then it is we act suitably to our Nature, and to the Circumstances God has placed us in. Neither is Affection itself at all a Weakness; nor does it argue Defect, any otherwise than as our Senses and Appetites do; They belong to our Condition of Nature, and are what we cannot be without. God Almighty is to be sure unmoved by Passion or Appetite, unchanged

changed by Affection: But then it is to be added, that he neither ſees, nor hears, nor perceives things by any Senſes like ours; but in a Manner infinitely more perfect. Now, as it is an Abſurdity almoſt too groſs to be mentioned, for a Man to endeavour to get rid of his Senſes, becauſe the ſupream Being diſcerns things more perfectly without them; it is as real, though not ſo obvious an Abſurdity, to endeavour to eradicate the Paſſions he has given us, becauſe He is without them. For, ſince our Paſſions are as really a Part of our Conſtitution as our Senſes; ſince the former as really belong to our Condition of Nature as the latter; to get rid of either, is equally a Violation of and breaking in upon that Nature and Conſtitution he has given us. Both our Senſes and our Paſſions are a Supply to the Imperfection of our Nature: Thus they ſhew that we are ſuch ſort of Creatures, as to ſtand in need of thoſe Helps which higher Orders of Creatures do not. But it is not the Supply, but the Deficiency; as it is not a Remedy, but a Diſeaſe, which is the Imperfection. However, our Appetites, Paſſions, Senſes, no way imply Diſeaſe: Nor indeed do they imply Deficiency or Imperfection

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fection of any ſort; but only This, that the Conſtitution of Nature according to which God has made us, is ſuch as to require them. And it is ſo far from being true, that a wiſe Man muſt intirely ſuppreſs Compaſſion, and all Fellow-feeling for others, as a Weakneſs; and truſt to Reaſon alone, to teach and enforce upon him the Practice of the ſeveral Charities we owe to our Kind; that on the contrary, even the bare Exerciſe of ſuch Affections would itſelf be for the Good and Happineſs of the World; and the Imperfection of the higher Principles of Reaſon and Religion in Man, the little Influence they have upon our Practice, and the Strength and Prevalency of contrary ones, plainly require theſe Affections, to be a Reſtraint upon theſe latter, and a Supply to the Deficiencies of the former.

Firſt, THE very exerciſe itſelf of theſe Affections, in a juſt and reaſonable Manner and Degree, would upon the whole increaſe the Satisfactions, and leſſen the Miſeries of Life.

IT is the Tendency and Buſineſs of Virtue and Religion to procure, as much as may be, univerſal Good-will, Truſt and Friendſhip amongſt Mankind. If this could be brought to obtain; and each Man enjoy-

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ed the Happineſs of others, as every one does that of a Friend; and looked upon the Succeſs and Proſperity of his Neighbour, as every one does upon that of his Children and Family; it is too manifeſt to be inſiſted upon, how much the Enjoyments of Life would be increaſed. There would be ſo much Happineſs introduced into the World, without any Deduction or Inconvenience from it, in Proportion as the Precept of *rejoycing with thoſe who rejoyce* was univerſally obeyed. Our Saviour has owned this good Affection as belonging to our Nature, in the Parable of the *loſt Sheep*; and does not think it to the Diſadvantage of a perfect State, to repreſent its Happineſs as capable of Increaſe from Reflection upon that of others.

BUT ſince in ſuch a Creature as Man, Compaſſion or Sorrow for the Diſtreſs of others, ſeems ſo far neceſſarily connected with Joy in their Proſperity, as that whoever rejoyces in one muſt unavoidably compaſſionate the other; there cannot be that Delight or Satisfaction, which appears to be ſo conſiderable, without the Inconveniencies, whatever they are, of Compaſſion.

HOWEVER,

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HOWEVER, without conſidering this Connection, there is no doubt but that more Good than Evil, more Delight than Sorrow, ariſes from Compaſſion itſelf; there being ſo many things which ballance the Sorrow of it. There is firſt the Relief which the diſtreſſed feel from this Affection in others towards them. There is likewiſe the Additional Miſery which they would feel from the Reflection that no one commiſerated their Caſe. It is indeed true, that any Diſpoſition, prevailing beyond a certain Degree, becomes ſomewhat wrong; and we have ways of ſpeaking, which though they do not directly expreſs that Exceſs, yet, always lead our Thoughts to it, and give us the Notion of it. Thus, when mention is made of Delight in being pitied, this always conveys to our Mind the Notion of ſomewhat which is really a Weakneſs: The manner of ſpeaking, I ſay, implies a certain Weakneſs and Feebleneſs of Mind, which is and ought to be diſapproved. But Men of the greateſt Fortitude would in Diſtreſs feel Uneaſineſs, from knowing that no Perſon in the World had any ſort of Compaſſion or real Concern for them; and in ſome Caſes, eſpecially

when the Temper is enfeebled by Sickneſs or any long and great Diſtreſs, doubtleſs, would feel a kind of Relief even from the helpleſs Good-will and ineffectual Aſſiſtances of thoſe about them. Over againſt the Sorrow of Compaſſion is likewiſe to be ſet a peculiar calm Kind of Satisfaction, which accompanies it, unleſs in Caſes where the Diſtreſs of Another is by ſome means ſo brought home to Ourſelves, as to become in a manner our own; or when from Weakneſs of Mind the Affection riſes too high, which ought to be corrected. This Tranquillity or calm Satisfaction proceeds, partly from Conſciouſneſs of a right Affection and Temper of Mind, and partly from a Senſe of our own Freedom from the Miſery we compaſſionate. This laſt may poſſibly appear to ſome at firſt ſight faulty; but it really is not ſo. It is the ſame with that poſitive Enjoyment, which ſudden Eaſe from Pain for the preſent affords, ariſing from a real Senſe of Miſery, joined with a Senſe of our Freedom from it; which in all caſes muſt afford ſome Degree of Satisfaction.

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To theſe things muſt be added the Obſervation, which reſpects both the Affections we are conſidering; that they who have got

SERM. V. got over all Fellow-feeling for Others, have withal contracted a certain Callouſneſs of Heart, which renders them inſenſible to moſt other Satisfactions, but thoſe of the groſſeſt kind.

Secondly, WITHOUT the Exerciſe of theſe Affections, Men would certainly be much more wanting in the Offices of Charity they owe to each other, and likewiſe more cruel and injurious, than they are at preſent.

THE private Intereſt of the Individual would not be ſufficiently provided for by reaſonable and cool Self-Love alone: Therefore the Appetites and Paſſions are placed within as a Guard and further Security, without which it would not be taken due Care of. It is manifeſt our Life would be neglected, were it not for the Calls of Hunger, and Thirſt, and Wearineſs; notwithſtanding that without them Reaſon would aſſure us, that the Recruits of Food and Sleep are the neceſſary means of our Preſervation. It is therefore abſurd to imagine, that, without Affection, the ſame Reaſon alone would be more effectual to engage us to perform the Duties we owe to our Fellow-Creatures. One of this Make would be as defective, as much wanting, conſidered

ed with reſpect to Society; as one of the former Make would be defective, or wanting, conſidered as an Individual, or in his private Capacity. Is it poſſible any can in earneſt think, that a Publick Spirit, *i. e.* a ſettled reaſonable Principle of Benevolence to Mankind, is ſo prevalent and ſtrong in the Species, as that we may venture to throw off the under Affections, which are its Aſſiſtants, carry it forward and mark out particular Courſes for it; Family, Friends, Neighbourhood, the Diſtreſſed, our Country? The common Joys and the common Sorrows, which belong to theſe Relations and Circumſtances, are as plainly uſeful to Society; as the Pain and Pleaſure belonging to Hunger, Thirſt, and Wearineſs are of Service to the Individual. In Defect of that higher Principle of Reaſon, Compaſſion is often the only Way by which the Indigent can have acceſs to us: And therefore to eradicate this, though it is not indeed formally to deny them that Aſſiſtance which is their Due; yet it is to cut them off from that which is too frequently their only way of obtaining it. And as for thoſe who have ſhut up this Door againſt the Complaints of the Miſerable, and conquered this Affection

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in themſelves; even theſe Perſons will be under great Reſtraints from the ſame Affection in Others. Thus a Man who has himſelf no Senſe of Injuſtice, Cruelty, Oppreſſion, will be kept from running the utmoſt Lengths of Wickedneſs, by fear of that Deteſtation, and even Reſentment of Inhumanity, in many particular Inſtances of it, which Compaſſion for the Object, towards whom ſuch Inhumanity is exerciſed, excites in the Bulk of Mankind. And this is frequently the chief Danger, and the chief Reſtraint, which Tyrants and the great Oppreſſours of the World feel.

IN general, Experience will ſhew, that as want of natural Appetite to Food ſuppoſes and proceeds from ſome bodily Diſeaſe; ſo the Apathy the Stoicks talk of as much ſuppoſes or is accompanied with ſomewhat amiſs in the Moral Character, in that which is the Health of the Mind. Thoſe who formerly aimed at this upon the Foot of Philoſophy, appear to have had better Succeſs in eradicating the Affections of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, than they had with the Paſſions of Envy, Pride, and Reſentment: Theſe latter, at beſt, were but concealed,

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and that imperfectly too. How far this Obſervation may be extended to ſuch as endeavour to ſuppreſs the natural Impulſes of their Affections, in order to form themſelves for Buſineſs and the World, I ſhall not determine. But there does not appear any Capacity or Relation to be named, in which Men ought to be entirely deaf to the Calls of Affection, unleſs the judicial one is to be excepted. SERM. V.

AND as to thoſe who are commonly called the Men of Pleaſure, it is manifeſt that the Reaſon they ſet up for Hardneſs of Heart, is to avoid being interrupted in their Courſe, by the Ruin and Miſery they are the Authors of: Neither are Perſons of this Character always the moſt free from the Impotencies of Envy and Reſentment. What may Men at laſt bring themſelves to, by ſuppreſſing their Paſſions and Affections of one Kind, and leaving thoſe of the other in their full Strength? But ſurely it might be expected, that Perſons who make Pleaſure their Study and their Buſineſs, if they underſtood what they profeſs, would reflect, how many of the Entertainments of Life, how many of thoſe Kind of Amuſements which ſeem peculiarly to belong to Men of Leiſure and

SERM. V. Education, they become insensible to by this acquired Hardness of Heart.

I SHALL close these Reflections with barely mentioning the Behaviour of that Divine Person, who was the Example of all Perfection in Human Nature, as represented in the Gospels mourning, and even, in a literal Sense, weeping over the Distresses of his Creatures.

THE Observation already made, that, of the two Affections mentioned in the Text, the latter exerts itself much more than the former; that, from the Original Constitution of Human Nature we much more generally and sensibly compassionate the Distressed, than rejoice with the Prosperous, requires to be particularly considered. This Observation therefore, with the Reflections which arise out of it, and which it leads our Thoughts to, shall be the Subject of another Discourse.

FOR the Conclusion of this, let me just take Notice of the Danger of over-great Refinements; of going besides or beyond the plain, obvious, first Appearances of Things, upon the Subject of Morals and Religion. The least Observation will show, how little the Generality of Men are capable

of

of Speculations. Therefore Morality and Religion muſt be ſomewhat plain and eaſy to be underſtood: It muſt appeal to what we call plain common Senſe, as diſtinguiſhed from ſuperiour Capacity and Improvement; becauſe it appeals to Mankind. Perſons of ſuperior Capacity and Improvement have often fallen into Errors, which no one of meer common Underſtanding could. Is it poſſible that one of this latter Character could ever of himſelf have thought, that there was abſolutely no ſuch thing in Mankind as Affection to the Good of others; ſuppoſe of Parents to their Children; or that what he felt upon ſeeing a Friend in Diſtreſs, was only Fear for himſelf; or, upon Suppoſition of the Affections of Kindneſs and Compaſſion, that it was the Buſineſs of Wiſdom and Virtue, to ſet him about extirpating them as faſt as he could? And yet each of theſe manifeſt Contradictions to Nature has been laid down by Men of Speculation, as a Diſcovery in moral Philoſophy; which they, it ſeems, have found out through all the ſpecious Appearances to the contrary. This Reflection may be extended further. The Extravagancies of Enthuſiaſm and Superſti-

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tion do not at all lie in the Road of common Senſe; and therefore ſo far as they are *original Miſtakes*, muſt be owing to going beſide or beyond it. Now, ſince Inquiry and Examination can relate only to Things ſo obſcure and uncertain as to ſtand in need of it, and to Perſons who are capable of it; the proper Advice to be given to plain honeſt Men, to ſecure them from the Extreams both of Superſtition and Irreligion, is that of the Son of *Sirach*: *In every good Work truſt thy own Soul; for this is the keeping of the Commandment* *.

* Ecclus. xxxii. 23.

SERMON VI.

Upon Compaſſion.

Preached the firſt Sunday in *Lent.*

ROM. xii. 15.

Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and weep with them that weep.

THERE is a much more exact Correſpondence between the natural and moral World, than we are apt to take Notice of. The inward Frame of Man does in a peculiar Manner anſwer to the external Condition and Circumſtances of Life, in which he is placed. This is a particular Inſtance of that general Obſervation of the Son of *Sirach*: * *All things are double one againſt another, and God hath made nothing imperfect.* The ſeveral Paſſions and Affections in the Heart of

* Eccluſ. xlii. 24.

SERM. VI. Man, compared with the Circumſtances of Life in which he is placed, afford, to ſuch as will attend to them, as certain Inſtances of final Cauſes, as any whatever which are more commonly alledged for ſuch: ſince thoſe Affections lead him to a certain determinate Courſe of Action ſuitable to thoſe Circumſtances; as (for Inſtance) Compaſſion, to relieve the Diſtreſs'd. And as all Obſervations of final Cauſes, drawn from the Principles of Action in the Heart of Man, compared with the Condition he is placed in, ſerve all the good Uſes which Inſtances of final Cauſes in the material World about us do; and both theſe are equally Proofs of Wiſdom and Deſign in the Author of Nature: So the former ſerve to further good Purpoſes; they ſhew us what Courſe of Life we are made for, what is our Duty, and in a peculiar Manner enforce upon us the Practice of it.

SUPPOSE we are capable of Happineſs and of Miſery in Degrees equally intenſe and extream, yet, we are capable of the latter for a much longer Time beyond all Compariſon. We ſee Men in the Tortures of Pain for Hours, Days, and, excepting the ſhort Suſpenſions of Sleep, for Months

Months together without Intermiſſion; to which no Enjoyments of Life do, in Degree and Continuance, bear any ſort of Proportion. And ſuch is our Make and that of the World about us, that any thing may become the Inſtrument of Pain and Sorrow to us. Thus almoſt any one Man is capable of doing Miſchief to any other, though he may not be capable of doing him Good: And if he be capable of doing him ſome Good, he is capable of doing him more Evil. And it is, in numberleſs Caſes, much more in our Power to leſſen the Miſeries of others, than to promote their poſitive Happineſs, any otherwiſe than as the former often includes the latter; Eaſe from Miſery occaſioning for ſome time the greateſt poſitive Enjoyment. This Conſtitution of Nature, namely, that it is ſo much more in our Power to occaſion and likewiſe to leſſen Miſery, than to promote poſitive Happineſs, plainly required a particular Affection, to hinder us from abuſing, and to incline us to make a right Uſe of the former Powers, *i. e.* the Powers both to occaſion and to leſſen Miſery; over and above what was neceſſary to induce us to make a right Uſe of the latter Power, that of promoting poſitive

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Happineſs. The Power we have over the Miſery of our Fellow-creatures, to occaſion or leſſen it, being a more important Truſt, than the Power we have of promoting their poſitive Happineſs; the former requires and has a further, an additional Security and Guard againſt its being violated, beyond and over and above what the latter has. The ſocial Nature of Man, and general Good-will to his Species, equally prevent him from doing Evil, incline him to relieve the Diſtreſſed, and to promote the poſitive Happineſs of his Fellow-creatures: But Compaſſion only reſtrains from the firſt, and carries him to the ſecond; it hath nothing to do with the third.

THE final Cauſes then of Compaſſion are to prevent and to relieve Miſery.

AS to the former: This Affection may plainly be a Reſtraint upon Reſentment, Envy, unreaſonable Self-love; that is, upon all the Principles from which Men do Evil to one another. Let us inſtance only in Reſentment. It ſeldom happens, in regulated Societies, that Men have an Enemy ſo intirely in their Power, as to be able to ſatiate their Reſentment with ſafety. But if we were to put this Caſe, it is plainly ſuppoſeable,

poſeable, that a Perſon might bring his Enemy into ſuch a Condition, as from being the Object of Anger and Rage, to become an Object of Compaſſion, even to himſelf, though the moſt malicious Man in the World: And in this Caſe Compaſſion would ſtop him, if he could ſtop with Safety, from purſuing his Revenge any farther. But ſince Nature has placed within us more powerful Reſtraints to prevent Miſchief, and ſince the final Cauſe of Compaſſion is much more to relieve Miſery, let us go on to the Conſideration of it in this View. SERM. VI.

As this World was not intended to be a State of any great Satisfaction or high Enjoyment; ſo neither was it intended to be a meer Scene of Unhappineſs and Sorrow. Mitigations and Reliefs are provided by the merciful Author of Nature, for moſt of the Afflictions in Humane Life. There is kind Proviſion made even againſt our Frailties; as we are ſo conſtituted that Time abundantly abates our Sorrows, and begets in us that Reſignment of Temper, which ought to have been produced by a better Cauſe; a due Senſe of the Authority of God, and our State of Dependance. This holds in reſpect

SERM. VI. reſpect to far the greateſt Part of the Evils of Life; I ſuppoſe, in ſome Degree, as to Pain and Sickneſs. Now this Part of the Conſtitution or Make of Man, conſidered as ſome Relief to Miſery, and not as Proviſion for poſitive Happineſs, is, if I may ſo ſpeak, an Inſtance of Nature's Compaſſion for us; and every natural Remedy or Relief to Miſery, may be conſidered in the ſame View.

BUT ſince, in many Caſes, it is very much in our Power to alleviate the Miſeries of each other; and Benevolence, though natural in Man to Man, yet is in a very low Degree, kept down by Intereſt and Competitions; and Men, for the moſt Part, are ſo engaged in the Buſineſs and Pleaſures of the World, as to overlook and turn away from Objects of Miſery; which are plainly conſidered as Interruptions to them in their Way, as Intruders upon their Buſineſs, their Gaiety and Mirth: Compaſſion is an Advocate within us in their behalf, to gain the Unhappy Admittance and Acceſs, to make their Caſe attended to. If it ſometimes ſerves a contrary Purpoſe, and makes Men induſtriouſly turn away from the Miſerable, theſe are only Inſtances of Abuſe and Perverſion: For the End, for which the

Affection

Affection was given us, moſt certainly is not to made us avoid, but to make us attend to the Objects of it. And if Men would only reſolve to allow thus much to it; let it bring before their View, the View of their Mind, the Miſeries of their Fellow-creatures; let it gain for them that their Caſe be conſidered; I am perſuaded it would not fail of gaining more, and that very few real Objects of Charity would paſs unrelieved. Pain and Sorrow and Miſery have a right to our Aſſiſtance: Compaſſion puts us in Mind of the Debt, and that we owe it to ourſelves, as well as to the Diſtreſſed. For, to endeavour to get rid of the Sorrow of Compaſſion by turning from the Wretched, when yet it is in our Power to relieve them, is as unnatural, as to endeavour to get rid of the Pain of Hunger by keeping from the Sight of Food. That we can do one with greater Succeſs than we can the other, is no Proof that one is leſs a Violation of Nature than the other. Compaſſion is a Call, a Demand of Nature, to relieve the Unhappy; as Hunger is a natural Call for Food. This Affection plainly gives the Objects of it an additional Claim to Relief and Mercy, over and above what our

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our Fellow-creatures in common have to our Good-will. Liberality and Bounty are exceedingly commendable; and a particular Diſtinction in ſuch a World as this, where Men ſet themſelves to contract their Heart, and cloſe it to all Intereſts but their own. It is by no means to be oppoſed to Mercy, but always accompanies it: The Diſtinction between them is only, that the former leads our Thoughts to a more promiſcuous and undiſtinguiſhed Diſtribution of Favours; to thoſe who are not, as well as thoſe who are neceſſitous; whereas the Object of Compaſſion is Miſery. But in the Compariſon, and where there is not a Poſſibility of both, Mercy is to have the Preference: The Affection of Compaſſion manifeſtly leads us to this Preference. Thus, to relieve the Indigent and Diſtreſſed, to ſingle out the Unhappy, from whom can be expected no Returns either of preſent Entertainment or future Service, for the Objects of our Favours; to eſteem a Man's being friendleſs as a Recommendation; Dejection, and Incapacity of ſtrugling through the World, as a Motive for aſſiſting him; in a word, to conſider theſe Circumſtances of Diſadvantage, which are uſually thought a ſufficient Reaſon for Neglect

Neglect and overlooking a Perſon, as a Motive for helping him forward: This is the Courſe of Benevolence which Compaſſion marks out and directs us to: This is that Humanity, which is ſo peculiarly becoming our Nature and Circumſtances in this World. SERM. VI.

To theſe Conſiderations, drawn from the Nature of Man, muſt be added the Reaſon of the Thing itſelf we are recommending, which accords to and ſhews the ſame. For, ſince it is ſo much more in our Power to leſſen the Miſery of our Fellow-creatures, than to promote their poſitive Happineſs; in Caſes where there is an Inconſiſtency, we ſhall be likely to do much more Good by ſetting ourſelves to mitigate the former, than by endeavouring to promote the latter. Let the Competition be between the Poor and the Rich. It is eaſy, you will ſay, to ſee which will have the Preference. True: But the Queſtion is, which ought to have the Preference? What Proportion is there, between the Happineſs produced by doing a Favour to the Indigent, and that produced by doing the ſame Favour to one in eaſy Circumſtances? It is manifeſt, that the Addition of a very large Eſtate to one who before had an Affluence, will in many Inſtances

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ſtances yield him leſs new Enjoyment or Satisfaction, than an ordinary Charity would yield to a neceſſitous Perſon. So that it is not only true, that our Nature, *i. e.* the Voice of God within us, carries us to the Exerciſe of Charity and Benevolence in the Way of Compaſſion or Mercy, preferably to any other Way; but we alſo manifeſtly diſcern much more Good done by the former; or, if you will allow me the Expreſſions, more Miſery annihilated, and Happineſs created. If Charity and Benevolence, and endeavouring to do Good to our Fellow-creatures, be any thing, this Obſervation deſerves to be moſt ſeriouſly conſidered by all who have to beſtow. And it holds with great Exactneſs, when applied to the ſeveral Degrees of greater and leſs Indigency throughout the various Ranks in Humane Life: The Happineſs or Good produced not being in Proportion to what is beſtowed, but in Proportion to This joined with the Need there was of it.

IT may perhaps be expected, that upon this Subject, Notice ſhould be taken of Occaſions, Circumſtances and Characters, which ſeem at once to call forth Affections of different Sorts. Thus Vice may be thought

thought the Object both of Pity and Indignation: Folly, of Pity and of Laughter. How far this is ſtrictly true, I ſhall not inquire; but only obſerve upon the Appearance, how much more Humane it is to yield and give Scope to Affections, which are more directly in Favour of, and friendly towards our Fellow-creatures; and that there is plainly much leſs Danger of being led wrong by theſe, than by the other. SERM. VI.

BUT, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid in Recommendation of Compaſſion, that it is moſt aimable, moſt becoming Humane Nature, and moſt uſeful to the World; yet it muſt be owned, that every Affection, as diſtinct from a Principle of Reaſon, may riſe too high, and be beyond its juſt Proportion. And by means of this one carried too far, a Man throughout his Life is ſubject to much more Uneaſineſs than belongs to his Share: And in particular Inſtances, it may be in ſuch a Degree, as to incapacitate him from aſſiſting the very Perſon who is the Object of it. But, as there are ſome who upon Principle ſet up for ſuppreſſing this Affection itſelf as Weakneſs, there is alſo I know not what of Faſhion on this Side; and, by ſome Means or other, the whole World almoſt

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moſt is run into the Extreams of Inſenſibility towards the Diſtreſſes of their Fellow-creatures: So that general Rules and Exhortations muſt always be on the other Side.

AND now to go on to the Uſes we ſhould make of the foregoing Reflections, the further ones they lead to, and the general Temper they have a Tendency to beget in us. There being that diſtinct Affection implanted in the Nature of Man, tending to leſſen the Miſeries of Life, that particular Proviſion made for abating its Sorrows, more than for increaſing its poſitive Happineſs, as before explained; this may ſuggeſt to us, what ſhould be our general Aim reſpecting ourſelves, in our paſſage through this World: Namely, to endeavour chiefly to eſcape Miſery, keep free from Uneaſineſs, Pain and Sorrow, or to get Relief and Mitigation of them; to propoſe to ourſelves Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, rather than purſue after high Enjoyments. This is what the Conſtitution of Nature before explained, marks out as the Courſe we ſhould follow, and the End we ſhould aim at. To make Pleaſure and Mirth and Jollity our Buſineſs, and be conſtantly hurrying about after ſome gay Amuſement, ſome new

new Gratification of Senſe or Appetite, to thoſe who will conſider the Nature of Man and our Condition in this World, will appear the moſt romantick Scheme of Life that ever entered into Thought. And yet how many are there who go on in this Courſe, without learning better from the daily, the hourly Diſappointments, Liſtleſsneſs and Satiety, which accompany this faſhionable Method of waſting away their Days? SERM. VI.

THE Subject we have been inſiſting upon would lead us into the ſame kind of Reflections, by a different Connection. The Miſeries of Life brought home to ourſelves by Compaſſion, viewed through this Affection conſidered as the Senſe by which they are perceived, would beget in us that Moderation, Humility, and Soberneſs of Mind, which has been now recommended; and which peculiarly belongs to a Seaſon of Recollection, the only Purpoſe of which is to bring us to a juſt Senſe of Things, to recover us out of that Forgetfulneſs of our ſelves, and our true State, which it is manifeſt far the greateſt Part of Men paſs their whole Life in. Upon this Account *Solomon* ſays, that *it is better to go to the Houſe of mourning, than to go to the Houſe of*

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feaſting. i. e. It is more to a Man's Advantage to turn his Eyes towards Objects of Diſtreſs, to recall ſometimes to his Remembrance the Occaſions of Sorrow, than to paſs all his Days in thoughtleſs Mirth and Gaiety. And he repreſents the Wiſe as chooſing to frequent the former of theſe Places; to be ſure not for its own Sake, but becauſe *by the ſadneſs of the Countenance the Heart is made better.* Every one obſerves, how temperate and reaſonable Men are when humbled and brought low by Afflictions, in compariſon of what they are in high Proſperity. By this voluntary Reſort to the Houſe of Mourning which is here recommended, we might learn all thoſe uſeful Inſtructions which Calamities teach, without undergoing them ourſelves; and grow wiſer and better at a more eaſy Rate than Men commonly do. The Objects themſelves, which in that Place of Sorrow lie before our View, naturally give us a Seriouſneſs and Attention, check that Wantonneſs which is the Growth of Proſperity and Eaſe, and lead us to reflect upon the Deficiencies of Humane Life itſelf; that *every Man at his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity.* This would correct the florid and gaudy Proſpects and

and Expectations which we are too apt to indulge, teach us to lower our Notions of Happineſs and Enjoyment, bring them down to the Reality of things, to what is attainable, to what the Frailty of our Condition will admit of, which, for any Continuance, is only Tranquillity, Eaſe, and moderate Satisfactions. Thus we might at once become Proof againſt the Temptations, with which the whole World almoſt is carried away; ſince it is plain, that not only what is called a Life of Pleaſure, but alſo vicious Purſuits in general, aim at ſomewhat beſides and beyond theſe moderate Satisfactions. SERM. VI.

AND as to that Obſtinacy and Wilfulneſs, which renders Men ſo inſenſible to the Motives of Religion; this right Senſe of ourſelves and of the World about us would bend the ſtubborn Mind, ſoften the Heart, and make it more apt to receive Impreſſion: And this is the proper Temper in which to call our Ways to Remembrance, to review and ſet home upon ourſelves the Miſcarriages of our paſt Life. In ſuch a compliant State of Mind, Reaſon and Conſcience will have a fair Hearing; which is the Preparation for, or rather the Beginning of

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that Repentance, the outward ſhow of which we all put on at this Seaſon.

Laſtly, THE various Miſeries of Life which lie before us wherever we turn our Eyes, the Frailty of this mortal State we are paſſing through, may put us in Mind that the preſent World is not our Home; that we are meerly Strangers and Travellers in it, as all our Fathers were. It is therefore to be conſidered as a foreign Country; in which our Poverty and Wants, and the inſufficient Supplies of them were deſigned to turn our Views to that higher and better State we are Heirs to: A State where will be no Follies to be overlooked, no Miſeries to be pitied, no Wants to be relieved; where the Affection we have been now treating of will happily be loſt, as there will be no Objects to exerciſe it upon: For *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain; for the former things are paſſed away.*

SERMON

SERMON VII.

Upon the Character of Balaam.

Preached the ſecond Sunday after *Eaſter*.

NUMB. XXIII. 10.

Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his.

THESE Words, taken alone, and without reſpect to him who ſpoke them, lead our Thoughts immediately to the different Ends of good and bad Men. For, though the Compariſon is not expreſs'd, yet it is manifeſtly implied; as is alſo the Preference of one of theſe Characters to the other in that laſt Circumſtance, Death. And, ſince dying the Death of the Righteous or of the Wicked, neceſſarily implies Men's being righteous or

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BUT, in order to avoid Cavils reſpecting this remarkable Relation in Scripture, either that Part of it which you have heard in the firſt Leſſon for the Day, or any other; let me juſt obſerve, that as this is not a Place for anſwering them, ſo they no way affect the following Diſcourſe; ſince the Character there given is plainly a real one in Life, and ſuch as there are Parallels to.

THE Occaſion of *Balaam*'s coming out of his own Country into the Land of *Moab*, where he pronounced this ſolemn Prayer or Wiſh, he himſelf relates in the

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firſt Parable or prophetick Speech, of which it is the Concluſion. In which is a Cuſtom referr'd to, proper to be taken Notice of: That of devoting Enemies to Deſtruction, before the Entrance upon a War with them. This Cuſtom appears to have prevailed over a great Part of the World; for we find it amongſt the moſt diſtant Nations. The *Romans* had publick Officers, to whom it belonged as a ſtated Part of their Office. But there was ſomewhat more particular in the Caſe now before us; *Balaam* being looked upon as an extraordinary Perſon, whoſe Bleſſing or Curſe was thought to be always effectual.

IN order to engage the Readers Attention to this Paſſage, the ſacred Hiſtorian has enumerated the preparatory Circumſtances, which are theſe. *Balaam* requires the King of *Moab* to build him ſeven Altars, and to prepare him the ſame Number of Oxen and of Rams. The Sacrifice being over, he retires alone to a Solitude ſacred to theſe Occaſions, there to wait the divine Inſpiration or Anſwer, for which the foregoing Rites were the Preparation. * *And God met*

* Ver. 4, 5.

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Balaam, and put a Word in his Mouth, upon receiving which, he returns back to the Altars; where was the King, who had all this while attended the Sacrifice, as appointed; he and all the Princes of *Moab* ſtanding, big with Expectation of the Prophet's Reply. * *And he took up his Parable and ſaid, Balak the King of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the Mountains of the Eaſt; ſaying, come, Curſe me Jacob, and come, defy Iſrael. How ſhall I curſe, whom God hath not curſed? Or how ſhall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the Rocks I ſee him, and from the Hills I behold him: Lo, the People ſhall dwell alone, and ſhall not be reckoned among the Nations. Who can count the Duſt of Jacob, and the Number of the fourth Part of Iſrael? Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his.*

IT is neceſſary, as you will ſee in the Progreſs of this Diſcourſe, particularly to obſerve what he underſtood by *Righteous.* And he himſelf is introduced in the Book of *Micch* † explaining it; if by *Righteous* is meant

* Ver. 6. † *Micah* vi.

meant *Good*, as to be ſure it is. *O my People, remember now what Balak King of Moab conſulted, and what Balaam the Son of Beor anſwered him from Shittim unto Gilgal.* From the mention of *Shittim* it is manifeſt, that it is this very Story which is here referr'd to, though another Part of it, the Account of which is not now extant; as there are many Quotations in Scripture out of Books which are not come down to us. *Remember what Balaam anſwered, that ye may know the Righteouſneſs of the Lord*, i. e. the Righteouſneſs which God will accept. *Balak* demands, *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with Burnt-Offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſand of Rams, or with ten thouſands of Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* *Balaam* anſwers him, *He hath ſhewed thee, O Man, what is Good: And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Here is a good Man expreſsly characterized, as diſtinct from a diſhoneſt, and a ſuperſti-

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tious Man. No Words can more ſtrongly exclude Diſhoneſty and Falſeneſs of Heart, than *doing Juſtice*, and *loving Mercy*: And both theſe, as well as *walking humbly with God*, are put in Oppoſition to thoſe ceremonial Methods of Recommendation, which *Balak* hoped might have ſerved the Turn. From hence appears what he meant by the *Righteous*, whoſe *Death* he deſires to die.

WHETHER it was his own Character ſhall now be inquired: And in order to determine it, we muſt take a View of his whole Behaviour upon this Occaſion. When the Elders of *Moab* came to him, though he appears to have been much allured with the Rewards offered, yet he had ſuch Regard to the Authority of God, as to keep the Meſſengers in Suſpence until he had conſulted his Will. *And God ſaid to him* *, *Thou ſhalt not go with them, thou ſhalt not curſe the People, for they are bleſſed.* Upon this he diſmiſſes the Ambaſſadors, with an abſolute refuſal of accompanying them back to their King. Thus far his Regards to his Duty prevailed, neither does there any thing appear as yet amiſs in his Conduct. His Anſwer being reported to the King

* Chap. xxii. 12.

King of *Moab*, a more honourable Embaſſy is immediately diſpatched, and greater Rewards propoſed. Then the Iniquity of his Heart began to diſcloſe itſelf. A thorough honeſt Man would without Heſitation have repeated his former Anſwer, that he could not be guilty of ſo infamous a Proſtitution of the ſacred Character with which he was inveſted, as in the Name of a Prophet to curſe thoſe, whom he knew to be bleſſed. But inſtead of this, which was the only honeſt Part in theſe Circumſtances that lay before him, he deſires the Princes of *Moab* to tarry that Night with him alſo; and for the Sake of the Reward deliberates, whether by ſome Means or other he might not be able to obtain leave to curſe *Iſrael*; to do that, which had been before revealed to him to be contrary to the Will of God, which yet he reſolves not to do without that Permiſſion. Upon which, as when this Nation afterwards rejected God from reigning over them, he gave them a King in his Anger; in the ſame Way, as appears from other Parts of the Narration, he gives *Balaam* the Permiſſion he deſired: For this is the moſt natural Senſe of the Words. Arriving in the Territories of *Moab*, and being received

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SERM. VII. received with particular Diſtinction by the King, and He repeating in Perſon the Promiſe of the Rewards he had before made to him by his Ambaſſadors: he ſeeks, the Text ſays, by *Sacrifices* and *Enchantments*, (what theſe were is not to our Purpoſe) to obtain Leave of God to curſe the People; keeping ſtill his Reſolution, not to do it without that Permiſſion: Which not being able to obtain, he had ſuch regard to the Command of God, as to keep this Reſolution to the laſt. The Suppoſition of his being under a ſupernatural Reſtraint is a meer Fiction of *Philo*: He is plainly repreſented to be under no other Force or Reſtraint, than the Fear of God. However, he goes on perſevering in that Endeavour, after he had declared, that *God had not beheld Iniquity in Jacob, neither had he ſeen Perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* * *i. e.* they were a People of Virtue and Piety ſo far as not to have drawn down, by their Iniquity, that Curſe which he was ſolliciting Leave to pronounce upon them. So that the State of *Balaam*'s Mind was this: He wanted to do what he knew to be very wicked, and contrary to the expreſs Command

* Ver. 21.

Command of God; he had inward Checks and Reſtraints, which he could not intirely get over; he therefore caſts about for Ways to reconcile this Wickedneſs with his Duty. How great a Paradox ſoever this may appear, as it is indeed a Contradiction in Terms, it is the very Account which the Scripture gives us of him. SERM. VII.

BUT there is a more ſurprizing Piece of Iniquity yet behind. Not daring in his religious Character as a Prophet to aſſiſt the King of *Moab*, he conſiders whether there might not be found ſome other Means of aſſiſting him againſt that very People, whom he himſelf by the Fear of God was reſtrained from curſing in Words. One would not think it poſſible, that the Weakneſs, even of religious Self-deceit in its utmoſt Exceſs, could have ſo poor a Diſtinction, ſo fond an Evaſion, to ſerve itſelf of. But ſo it was: And he could think of no other Method, than to betray the Children of *Iſrael* to provoke his Wrath, who was their only Strength and Defence. The Temptation which he pitched upon, was that concerning which *Solomon* afterwards obſerved, that it had *caſt down many wounded; yea, many ſtrong Men had been ſlain by it*: And

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And of which he himſelf was a ſad Example, when *his Wives turned away his Heart after other Gods.* This ſucceeded: The People ſin againſt God; and thus the Prophet's Counſel brought on that Deſtruction, which he could by no means be prevailed upon to aſſiſt with the religious Ceremony of Execration, which the King of *Moab* thought would itſelf have effected it. Their Crime and Puniſhment are related in *Deuteronomy* *, and *Numbers* †. And from the Relation repeated in *Numbers* (*a*), it appears, that *Balaam* was the Contriver of the whole Matter. It is alſo aſcribed to him in *the Revelation* (*b*), where he is ſaid to have *taught Balak to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the Children of Iſrael.*

THIS was the Man, this *Balaam*, I ſay, was the Man who deſired to *die the Death of the Righteous*, and that his *laſt End might be like his:* And this was the State of his Mind, when he pronounced theſe Words.

SO that the Object we have now before us is the moſt aſtoniſhing in the World: A very wicked Man, under a deep Senſe of God

* Chap. iv. † Chap. xxv. (*a*) Chap. xxxi. (*b*) Chap. ii.

God and Religion, perſiſting ſtill in his Wickedneſs, and preferring the Wages of Unrighteouſneſs, even when he had before him a lively View of Death, and that approaching Period of his Days, which ſhould deprive him of all thoſe Advantages for which he was proſtituting himſelf; and likewiſe a Proſpect, whether certain or uncertain, of a future State of Retribution: All this joined with an explicit ardent Wiſh, that, when he was to leave this World, he might be in the Condition of a righteous Man. Good God, what Inconſiſtency, what Perplexity is here! With what different Views of things, with what contradictory Principles of Action, muſt ſuch a Mind be torn and diſtracted! It was not unthinking Careleſſneſs, by which he run on headlong in Vice and Folly, without ever making a ſtand to aſk himſelf what he was doing: No; he acted upon the cool Motives of Intereſt and Advantage. Neither was he totally hard and callous to Impreſſions of Religion, what we call Abandoned; for he abſolutely denyed to curſe *Iſrael.* When Reaſon aſſumes her Place, when convinced of his Duty, when he owns and feels, and is actually under the Influence of the divine Authority; SERM. VII.

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Authority; whilſt he is carrying on his Views to the Grave, the End of all temporal Greatneſs; under this Senſe of things, with the better Character and more deſirable State preſent——full before him—in his Thoughts, in his Wiſhes, voluntarily to chooſe the worſe——What Fatality is here! Or how otherwiſe can ſuch a Character be explained? And yet, ſtrange as it may appear, it is not altogether an uncommon one: Nay, with ſome ſmall Alterations, and put a little lower, it is applicable to a very conſiderable Part of the World. For, if the reaſonable Choice be ſeen and acknowledged, and yet Men make the unreaſonable one, is not this the ſame Contradiction; that very Inconſiſtency, which appeared ſo unaccountable?

To give ſome little Opening to ſuch Characters and Behaviour, it is to be obſerved in general, that there is no Account to be given in the Way of Reaſon, of Men's ſo ſtrong Attachments to the preſent World: Our Hopes and Fears and Purſuits are in Degrees beyond all Proportion to the known Value of the Things they reſpect. This may be ſaid without taking into Conſideration Religion and a future State; and when theſe are

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are conſidered, the Diſproportion is infinitely heightened. Now when Men go againſt their Reaſon, and contradict a more important Intereſt at a Diſtance, for one nearer, though of leſs Conſideration; if this be the Whole of the Caſe, all that can be ſaid is, that ſtrong Paſſions, ſome kind of brute Force within, prevails over the Principle of Rationality. However, if this be with a clear, full and diſtinct View of the Truth of Things, then it is doing the utmoſt Violence to Themſelves, acting in the moſt palpable Contradiction to their very Nature. But if there be any ſuch thing in Mankind, as putting Half-deceits upon themſelves; which there plainly is, either by avoiding Reflection, or (if they do reflect) by religious Equivocation, Subterfuges, and palliating Matters to themſelves; by theſe Means Conſcience may be laid aſleep, and they may go on in a Courſe of Wickedneſs with leſs Diſturbance. All the various Turns, Doubles and Intricacies in a diſhoneſt Heart, cannot be unfolded or laid open; but that there is ſomewhat of that Kind is manifeſt, be it to be called Self-deceit, or by any other Name. *Balaam* had before his Eyes the Authority of God, abſolutely forbidding him what he, for

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the Sake of a Reward, had the ſtrongeſt Inclination to: He was likewiſe in a State of Mind ſober enough to conſider Death and his laſt End: By theſe Conſiderations he was reſtrained, firſt from going to the King of *Moab*; and after he did go, from curſing *Iſrael*. But notwithſtanding this, there was great Wickedneſs in his Heart. He could not forego the Rewards of Unrighteouſneſs: He therefore firſt ſeeks for Indulgences; and when theſe could not be obtained, he ſins againſt the whole Meaning, End and Deſign of the Prohibition, which no Conſideration in the World could prevail with him to go againſt the Letter of. And ſurely that impious Counſel, he gave to *Balak* againſt the Children of *Iſrael*, was, conſidered in itſelf, a greater Piece of Wickedneſs, than if he had curſed them in Words.

IF it be inquired what his Situation, his Hopes and Fears were, in reſpect to this his Wiſh: The Anſwer muſt be, that Conſciouſneſs of the Wickedneſs of his Heart muſt neceſſarily have deſtroyed all ſettled Hopes of dying the Death of the Righteous: He could have no calm Satisfaction in this View of his laſt End: Yet, on the other hand, it is poſſible that thoſe partial Regards

gards to his Duty, now mentioned, might keep him from perfect Deſpair. SERM. VII.

UPON the Whole, it is manifeſt that *Balaam* had the moſt juſt and true Notions of God and Religion; as appears, partly from the original Story itſelf, and more plainly from the Paſſage in *Micah*; where he explains Religion to conſiſt in real Virtue and real Piety, expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from Superſtition, and in Terms which moſt ſtrongly exclude Diſhoneſty and Falſeneſs of Heart. Yet you ſee his Behaviour: He ſeeks Indulgences for plain Wickedneſs; which not being able to obtain, he gloſſes over that ſame Wickedneſs, dreſſes it up in a new Form, in order to make it paſs off more eaſily with himſelf. That is, he deliberately contrives to deceive and impoſe upon himſelf, in a Matter which he knew to be of the utmoſt Importance.

TO bring theſe Obſervations home to ourſelves. It is too evident that many Perſons allow themſelves in very unjuſtifiable Courſes, who yet make great Pretences to Religion; not to deceive the World, none can be ſo weak as to think this will paſs in our Age; but from Principles, Hopes, and Fears, reſpecting God and a future State;

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and go on thus with a ſort of Tranquillity and Quiet of Mind. This cannot be upon a thorough Conſideration, and full Reſolution, that the Pleaſures and Advantages they propoſe are to be purſued at all Hazards, againſt Reaſon, againſt the Law of God, and though everlaſting Deſtruction is to be the Conſequence. This would be doing too great Violence upon themſelves. No, they are for making a Compoſition with the Almighty. Theſe of his Commands they will obey: But as to others—why they will make all the Atonements in their Power; the ambitious, the covetous, the diſſolute Man, each in a Way which ſhall not contradict his reſpective Purſuit. Indulgences before, which was *Balaam*'s firſt Attempt, though he was not ſo ſucceſsful in it as to deceive himſelf, or Atonements afterwards, are all the ſame. And here perhaps come in faint Hopes that they may, and Half-reſolves that they will, one time or other, make a Change.

BESIDES theſe, there are alſo Perſons, who from a more juſt way of conſidering things, ſee the infinite Abſurdity of This, of ſubſtituting Sacrifice inſtead of Obedience; there are Perſons far enough from Superſtition,

ſtition, and not without ſome real Senſe of God and Religion upon their Minds; who yet are guilty of moſt unjuſtifiable Practices, and go on with great Coolneſs and Command over themſelves. The ſame Diſhoneſty and Unſoundneſs of Heart diſcovers itſelf in Theſe another way. In all common ordinary Caſes we ſee intuitively at firſt View what is our Duty, what is the honeſt Part. This is the Ground of the Obſervation, that the firſt Thought is often the beſt. In theſe Caſes Doubt and Deliberation is itſelf Diſhoneſty; as it was in *Balaam* upon the ſecond Meſſage. That which is called conſidering what is our Duty in a particular Caſe, is very often nothing but endeavouring to explain it away. Thus thoſe Courſes, which, if Men would fairly attend to the Dictates of their own Conſciences, they would ſee to be Corruption, Exceſs, Oppreſſion, Uncharitableneſs; theſe are refined upon—— Things were ſo and ſo circumſtantiated—— Great Difficulties are raiſed about fixing Bounds and Degrees: And thus every moral Obligation whatever may be evaded. Here is Scope, I ſay, for an unfair Mind to explain away every moral Obligation to itſelf. Whether Men reflect again upon

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this internal Management and Artifice, and how explicit they are with themſelves, is another Queſtion. There are many Operations of the Mind, many things paſs within, which we never reflect upon again; which a By-ſtander, from having frequent Opportunities of obſerving us and our Conduct, may make ſhrewd Gueſſes at.

THAT great Numbers are in this Way of deceiving themſelves is certain. There is ſcarce a Man in the World, who has intirely got over all Regards, Hopes and Fears, concerning God and a future State; and theſe Apprehenſions in the Generality, bad as we are, prevail in conſiderable Degrees: Yet Men will and can be wicked with Calmneſs and Thought; we ſee they are. There muſt therefore be ſome Method of making it ſit a little eaſy upon their Minds; which, in the Superſtitious, is thoſe Indulgences and Atonements before-mentioned, and this Self-deceit of another Kind in Perſons of another Character. And both theſe proceed from a certain Unfairneſs of Mind, a peculiar inward Diſhoneſty; the direct contrary to that Simplicity which our Saviour recommends, under the Notion of *becoming little Children*, as a neceſſary Qualification for

for our entering into the Kingdom of Heaven. SERM. VII.

BUT to conclude: How much ſoever Men differ in the Courſe of Life they prefer, and in their Ways of palliating and excuſing their Vices to themſelves; yet all agree in the one thing, deſiring to *die the Death of the righteous.* This is ſurely remarkable. The Obſervation may be extended further, and put thus: Even without determining what that is which we call Guilt or Innocence, there is no Man but would chooſe, after having had the Pleaſure or Advantage of a vitious Action, to be free of the Guilt of it, to be in the State of an innocent Man. This ſhews at leaſt the Diſturbance, and implicit Diſſatisfaction in Vice. If we enquire into the Grounds of it, we ſhall find it proceeds partly from an immediate Senſe of having done Evil; and partly from an Apprehenſion, that this inward Senſe ſhall one time or another be ſeconded by an higher Judgment, upon which our whole Being depends. Now to ſuſpend and drown this Senſe, and theſe Apprehenſions, be it by the Hurry of Buſineſs or of Pleaſure, or by Superſtition, or moral Equivocations, this is in a Manner one and the ſame, and makes

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no Alteration at all in the Nature of our Caſe. Things and Actions are what they are, and the Conſequences of them will be what they will be: Why then ſhould we deſire to be deceived? As we are reaſonable Creatures, and have any Regard to ourſelves, we ought to lay theſe things plainly and honeſtly before our Mind, and upon this, act as you pleaſe, as you think moſt fit; make that Choice and prefer that Courſe of Life, which you can juſtify to yourſelves, and which ſits moſt eaſy upon your own Mind. It will immediately appear, that Vice cannot be the Happineſs, but muſt upon the whole be the Miſery, of ſuch a Creature as Man; a Moral, an Accountable Agent. Superſtitious Obſervances, Self-Deceit though of a more refined Sort, will not in reality at all mend Matters with us. And the Reſult of the whole can be nothing elſe, but that with Simplicity and Fairneſs we *keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for this alone ſhall bring a Man Peace at the laſt.*

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

Upon Reſentment.

MATTH. V. 43, 44.

Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: But I ſay unto you, Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you.

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SINCE perfect Goodneſs in the Deity is the Principle, from whence the Univerſe was brought into Being, and by which it is preſerved; and ſince general Benevolence is the great Law of the whole moral Creation: It is a Queſtion which immediately occurs, *Why had Man implanted in him a Principle, which appears the direct contrary to Benevolence?* Now the Foot

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Foot upon which Inquiries of this Kind ſhould be treated is this: To take Humane Nature as it is, and the Circumſtances in which it is placed as they are; and then conſider the Correſpondence between that Nature and thoſe Circumſtances, or what Courſe of Action and Behaviour, reſpecting thoſe Circumſtances, any particular Affection or Paſſion leads us to. This I mention to diſtinguiſh the Matter now before us from Diſquiſitions of quite another Kind; namely, *Why we are not made more perfect Creatures, or placed in better Circumſtances?* Theſe being Queſtions which we have not, that I know of, any thing at all to do with. God Almighty undoubtedly foreſaw the Diſorders, both natural and moral, which would happen in this State of things. If upon this we ſet ourſelves to ſearch and examine, why he did not prevent them; we ſhall, I am afraid, be in Danger of running into ſomewhat worſe than impertinent Curioſity. But upon this to examine, how far the Nature which he hath given us hath a Reſpect to thoſe Circumſtances, ſuch as they are; how far it leads us to act a proper Part in them; plainly belongs to us: And ſuch Inquiries are in many ways of excellent Uſe. Thus the

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thing to be conſidered is, not, *Why we were not made of ſuch a Nature, and placed in ſuch Circumſtances, as to have no need of ſo harſh and turbulent a Paſſion as Reſentment*; But, taking our Nature and Condition as being what they are, *Why or for what End ſuch a Paſſion was given us:* And this chiefly in order to ſhew, what are the Abuſes of it. SERM. VIII.

THE Perſons who laid down for a Rule, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour and hate thine Enemy*, made ſhort Work with this Matter. They did not, it ſeems, perceive any thing to be diſapproved in Hatred, more than in Good-will: And, according to their Syſtem of Morals, our Enemy was the proper natural Object of one of theſe Paſſions, as our Neighbour was of the other of them. This was all they had to ſay, and all they thought needful to be ſaid, upon the Subject. But this cannot be ſatisfactory; becauſe Hatred, Malice and Revenge, are directly contrary to the Religion we profeſs, and to the Nature and Reaſon of the thing itſelf. Therefore, ſince no Paſſion God hath endued us with can be in itſelf Evil; and yet ſince Men frequently indulge a Paſſion in ſuch Ways and Degrees, that at length it becomes quite another

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nother thing from what it was originally in our Nature; and thoſe Vices of Malice and Revenge in particular take their Occaſion from the natural Paſſion of Reſentment: It will be needful to trace This up to its Original, that we may ſee, *What it is in itſelf, as placed in our Nature by its Author*; from which it will plainly appear, *For what Ends it was placed there.* And when we know what the Paſſion is in itſelf, and the Ends of it, we ſhall eaſily ſee, *What are the Abuſes of it, in which Malice and Revenge conſiſt*; and which are ſo ſtrongly forbidden in the Text, by the direct contrary being commanded.

RESENTMENT is of two Kinds: *Haſty and ſudden*, or *ſettled and deliberate.* The former is called Anger, and often *Paſſion*; which, though a general Word, is frequently appropriated and confined to the particular Feeling, ſudden Anger, as diſtinct from deliberate Reſentment, Malice and Revenge. In all theſe Words is uſually implied ſomewhat vitious; ſomewhat unreaſonable as to the Occaſion of the Paſſion, or immoderate as to the Degree or Duration of it. But that the natural Paſſion itſelf is indifferent, St. *Paul* has aſſerted in that Precept, *Be ye angry*

gry and ſin not *: Which though it is by no means to be underſtood as an Encouragement to indulge ourſelves in Anger, the Senſe being certainly this, *Though ye be angry, ſin not*; yet here is evidently a Diſtinction made, between Anger and Sin; between the natural Paſſion, and ſinful Anger. SERM. VIII.

Sudden Anger upon certain Occaſions is meer Inſtinct: As meerly ſo, as the Diſpoſition to cloſe our Eyes upon the Apprehenſion of ſomewhat falling into them; and no more neceſſarily implies any Degree of Reaſon. I ſay, *neceſſarily*: For to be ſure *haſty*, as well as *deliberate*, Anger may be occaſioned by Injury or Contempt; in which Caſes Reaſon ſuggeſts to our Thoughts that Injury and Contempt, which is the Occaſion of the Paſſion: But I am ſpeaking of the former only ſo far as it is to be diſtinguiſhed from the latter. The only Way, in which our Reaſon and Underſtanding can raiſe Anger, is by repreſenting to our Mind Injuſtice or Injury of ſome Kind or other. Now momentary Anger is frequently raiſed, not only without any real, but without any apparent Reaſon; that is, without any Appearance of Injury, as diſtinct from Hurt or Pain.

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* Epheſ. iv. 26.

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It cannot, I ſuppoſe, be thought that this Paſſion, in Infants; in the lower Species of Animals; and, which is often ſeen, in Men towards them; it cannot, I ſay, be imagined that theſe Inſtances of this Paſſion are the Effect of Reaſon: No, they are occaſioned by meer Senſation and Feeling. It is Oppoſition, ſudden Hurt, Violence, which naturally excites the Paſſion; and the real Demerit or Fault of him who offers that Violence, or is the Cauſe of that Oppoſition or Hurt, does not in many Caſes ſo much as come into Thought.

THE Reaſon and End, for which Man was made thus liable to this Paſſion, is, that he might be better qualified to prevent, and likewiſe (or perhaps chiefly) to reſiſt and defeat, ſudden Force, Violence and Oppoſition, conſidered meerly as ſuch, and without Regard to the Fault or Demerit of him who is the Author of them. Yet, ſince Violence may be conſidered in this other and further View, as implying Fault; and ſince Injury, as diſtinct from Harm, may raiſe ſudden Anger; ſudden Anger may likewiſe accidentally ſerve to prevent, or remedy, ſuch Fault and Injury. But, conſidered as diſtinct from ſettled Anger, it ſtands in our Nature for Self-defence, and not

not for the Adminiſtration of Juſtice. There are plainly Caſes, and in the uncultivated Parts of the World, and, where regular Governments are not formed, they frequently happen, in which there is no Time for Conſideration, and yet to be paſſive is certain Deſtruction; in which, ſudden Reſiſtance is the only Security. SERM. VIII.

BUT from *This, deliberate Anger or Reſentment* is eſſentially diſtinguiſhed, as the latter is not naturally excited by, or intended to prevent mere Harm without appearance of Wrong or Injuſtice. Now, in order to ſee, as exactly as we can, what is the natural Object and Occaſion of ſuch Reſentment; let us reflect upon the Manner in which we are touched with reading, ſuppoſe, a feigned Story of Baſeneſs and Villany, properly worked up to move our Paſſions. This immediately raiſes Indignation, ſomewhat of a Deſire that it ſhould be puniſhed. And though the deſigned Injury be prevented, yet that it was deſigned is ſufficient to raiſe this inward Feeling. Suppoſe the Story true, this inward Feeling would be as natural and as juſt: And one may venture to affirm, that there is ſcarce a Man in the World, but would have it upon ſome Occaſions. It ſeems *in*

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us plainly connected with a Senſe of Virtue and Vice, of moral Good and Evil. Suppoſe further, we knew both the Perſon who did, and who ſuffered the Injury: Neither would this make any Alteration, only that it would probably affect us more. The Indignation raiſed by Cruelty and Injuſtice, and the Deſire of having it puniſhed, which Perſons unconcerned would feel, is by no means Malice. No, it is Reſentment againſt Vice and Wickedneſs: It is one of the common Bonds, by which Society is held together; a Fellow-feeling which each Individual has in Behalf of the whole Species, as well as of himſelf. And it does not appear that This, generally ſpeaking, is at all too high amongſt Mankind. Suppoſe now the Injury I have been ſpeaking of, to be done againſt ourſelves; or thoſe whom we conſider as ourſelves. It is plain, the Way, in which we ſhould be affected, would be exactly the ſame in Kind: but it would certainly be in a higher Degree, and leſs tranſient; becauſe a Senſe of our own Happineſs and Miſery is moſt intimately and always preſent to us; and, from the very Conſtitution of our Nature, we cannot but have a greater Senſibility to, and be more deeply intereſted in, what concerns

cerns ourſelves. And this ſeems to be the whole of this Paſſion which is, properly ſpeaking, natural to Mankind: Namely, a Reſentment againſt Injury and Wickedneſs in general; and in a higher Degree when towards ourſelves, in Proportion to the greater Regard which Men naturally have for themſelves, than for others. From hence it appears, that it is not natural, but moral Evil; it is not Suffering, but Injury, which raiſes that Anger or Reſentment, which is of any Continuance. The natural Object of it is not one, who appears to the ſuffering Perſon to have been only the innocent Occaſion of his Pain or Loſs; but one, who has been in a moral Senſe injurious either to ourſelves or others. This is abundantly confirmed by obſerving, what it is which heightens or leſſens Reſentment; namely, the ſame which aggravates or leſſens the Fault: Friendſhip and former Obligations, on one hand; or Inadvertency, ſtrong Temptations and Miſtake, on the other. All this is ſo much underſtood by Mankind, how little ſoever it be reflected upon, that a Perſon would be reckoned quite diſtracted, who ſhould cooly reſent an Harm, which had not to himſelf the Appearance of Injury or Wrong. Men do

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indeed reſent what is occaſioned through Careleſſneſs: But then they expect Obſervance as their due, and ſo that Careleſſneſs is conſidered as faulty. It is likewiſe true, that they reſent more ſtrongly an Injury done, than one which, though deſigned, was prevented, in Caſes where the Guilt is perhaps the ſame: The Reaſon however is, not that bare Pain or Loſs raiſes Reſentment, but, that it gives a new, and, as I may ſpeak, additional Senſe of the Injury or Injuſtice. According to the natural Courſe of the Paſſions, the Degrees of Reſentment are in Proportion, not only to the Degree of Deſign and Deliberation in the injurious Perſon; but in Proportion to this, joined with the Degree of the Evil deſigned or premeditated; ſince this likewiſe comes in to make the Injuſtice greater or leſs. And the Evil or Harm will appear greater when they feel it, than when they only reflect upon it: So therefore will the Injury: And conſequently the Reſentment will be greater.

THE natural Object, or Occaſion, of ſettled Reſentment then being Injury, as diſtinct from Pain or Loſs; it is eaſy to ſee, that to prevent and to remedy ſuch Injury, and the Miſeries ariſing from it, is the End for which

which this Paſſion was implanted in Man. It is to be conſidered as a Weapon, put into our Hands by Nature, againſt Injury, Injuſtice and Cruelty: How it may be innocently employed and make uſe of, ſhall preſently be mentioned. SERM. VIII.

THE Account, which has been now given of this Paſſion, is in brief, that ſudden Anger is raiſed by, and was chiefly intended to prevent or remedy, meer Harm diſtinct from Injury: But that it *may* be raiſed by Injury, and *may* ſerve to prevent or to remedy it; and then the Occaſions and Effects of it are the ſame, with the Occaſions and Effects of deliberate Anger. But they are eſſentially diſtinguiſhed in this, that the latter is never occaſioned by Harm, diſtinct from Injury; and its natural proper End is to remedy or prevent only that Harm, which implies, or is ſuppoſed to imply, Injury or moral Wrong. Every one ſees that theſe Obſervations do not relate to thoſe, who have habitually ſuppreſſed the Courſe of their Paſſions and Affections, out of Regard either to Intereſt or Virtue; or who, from Habits of Vice and Folly, have changed their Nature. But, I ſuppoſe, there can be no doubt but this, now deſcribed, is the general Courſe of Reſent-

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ment, conſidered as a natural Paſſion, neither increaſed by Indulgence, nor corrected by Virtue, nor prevailed over by other Paſſions, or particular Habits of Life.

As to the Abuſes of Anger, which it is to be obſerved may be in all different Degrees, the firſt which occurs is what is commonly called *Paſſion*; to which ſome Men are liable, in the ſame Way as others are to the *Epilepſie*, or any ſudden particular Diſorder. This Diſtemper of the Mind ſeizes them upon the leaſt Occaſion in the World, and perpetually without any real Reaſon at all: And by Means of it they are plainly, every Day, every waking Hour of their Lives, liable and in Danger of running into the moſt extravagant Outrages. Of a leſs boiſterous, but not of a leſs innocent Kind, is *Peeviſhneſs*; which I mention with Pity, with real Pity to the unhappy Creatures, who, from their inferiour Station, or other Circumſtances and Relations, are obliged to be in the Way of, and to ſerve for a Supply to it. Both theſe, for ought that I can ſee, are one and the ſame Principle: But, as it takes Root in Minds of different Makes, it appears differently, and ſo is come to be diſtinguiſhed by different Names. That which

which in a more feeble Temper is Peeviſh- SERM. VIII.
neſs, and languidly diſcharges itſelf upon every thing which comes in its Way; the ſame Principle, in a Temper of greater Force and ſtronger Paſſions, becomes Rage and Fury. In one, the Humour diſcharges itſelf at once; in the other, it is continually diſcharging. This is the Account of *Paſſion* and *Peeviſhneſs*, as diſtinct from each other, and appearing in different Perſons. It is no Objection againſt the Truth of it, that they are both to be ſeen ſometimes in one and the ſame Perſon.

WITH reſpect to deliberate Reſentment, the chief Inſtances of Abuſe are: When, from Partiality to ourſelves, we imagine an Injury done us, when there is none: When this Partiality repreſents it to us greater than it really is: When we fall into that extravagant and monſtrous Kind of Reſentment, towards one who has innocently been the Occaſion of Evil to us; that is, Reſentment upon Account of Pain or Inconvenience, without Injury; which is the ſame Abſurdity, as ſettled Anger at a thing that is inanimate: When the Indignation againſt Injury and Injuſtice riſes too high, and is beyond Proportion to the particular ill Action it is exer-

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ciſed upon: Or laſtly, when Pain or Harm of any Kind is inflicted meerly in Conſequence of, and to gratify, that Reſentment, though naturally raiſed.

IT would be endleſs to deſcend into and explain all the Peculiarities of Peryerſeneſs, and wayward Humour, which might be traced up to this Paſſion. But there is one thing, which ſo generally belongs to and accompanies all Exceſs and Abuſe of it, as to require being mentioned: a certain Determination, and reſolute Bent of Mind, not to be convinced or ſet right; though it be ever ſo plain, that there is no Reaſon for the Diſpleaſure, that it was raiſed merely by Error or Miſunderſtanding. In this there is doubtleſs a great Mixture of Pride; but there is ſomewhat more, which I cannot otherwiſe expreſs than, that Reſentment has taken Poſſeſſion of the Temper and of the Mind, and will not quit its Hold. It would be too minute, to inquire whether this be any thing more than bare Obſtinacy: It is ſufficient to obſerve, that it in a very particular Manner and Degree, belongs to the Abuſes of this Paſſion.

BUT, notwithſtanding all theſe Abuſes; "Is not juſt Indignation againſt Cruelty and "Wrong, one of the *Inſtruments of Death* "which

" which the Author of our Nature hath pro- SERM. VIII.
" vided? Are not Cruelty, Injuſtice and
" Wrong, the natural Objects of that Indig-
" nation? Surely then it may one way or o-
" ther be innocently employed againſt them."
True. Since therefore it is neceſſary for the very Subſiſtence of the World, that Injury, Injuſtice and Cruelty, ſhould be puniſhed; and ſince Compaſſion, which is ſo natural to Mankind, would render that Execution of Juſtice exceedingly difficult and uneaſie; Indignation againſt Vice and Wickedneſs is, and may be allowed to be, a Ballance to that Weakneſs of Pity, and alſo to any thing elſe which would prevent the neceſſary Methods of Severity. Thoſe, who have never thought upon theſe Subjects, may perhaps not ſee the Weight of this: But let us ſuppoſe a Perſon guilty of Murther, or any other Action of Cruelty, and that Mankind had naturally no Indignation againſt ſuch Wickedneſs and the Authors of it; but that Every Body was affected towards ſuch a Criminal in the ſame Way, as towards an innocent Man: Compaſſion, amongſt other Things, would render the Execution of Juſtice exceedingly painful and difficult, and would often quite prevent it. And notwithſtanding that the

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Principle of Benevolence is denied by ſome, and is really in a very low Degree, that Men are in great Meaſure inſenſible to the Happineſs of their Fellow-creatures; yet they are not inſenſible to their Miſery, but are very ſtrongly moved with it: Inſomuch that there plainly is Occaſion for that Feeling which is raiſed by Guilt and Demerit, as a Ballance to that of Compaſſion. Thus much may I think juſtly be allowed to Reſentment, in the ſtricteſt way of Moral Conſideration.

THE good Influence which this Paſſion has in Fact upon the Affairs of the World, is obvious to every one's Notice. Men are plainly reſtrained from injuring their Fellow-creatures by Fear of their Reſentment; and it is very happy that they are ſo, when they would not be reſtrained by a Principle of Virtue. And after an Injury is done, and there is a Neceſſity that the Offender ſhould be brought to Juſtice; the cool Conſideration of Reaſon, that the Security and Peace of Society requires Examples of Juſtice ſhould be made, might indeed be ſufficient to procure Laws to be enacted, and Sentence paſs'd: But is it that cool Reflection in the injured Perſon, which, for the moſt Part, brings the Offender to Juſtice? Or is it not Reſentment and In-

dignation againſt the Injury and the Author of it? I am afraid there is no Doubt, which is commonly the Caſe. This however is to be conſidered as a good Effect, notwithſtanding it were much to be wiſhed that Men would act from a better Principle, Reaſon and cool Reflection. SERM. VIII.

THE Account now given of the Paſſion of Reſentment, as diſtinct from all the Abuſes of it, may ſuggeſt to our Thoughts the following Reflections.

Firſt, That Vice is indeed of ill-deſert, and muſt finally be puniſhed. Why ſhould Men diſpute concerning the Reality of Virtue, and whether it be founded in the Nature of Things, which yet ſurely is not Matter of Queſtion; but why ſhould this, I ſay, be diſputed, when every Man carries about him this Paſſion, which affords him Demonſtration, that the Rules of Juſtice and Equity are to be the Guide of his Actions? For every Man naturally feels an Indignation upon ſeeing Inſtances of Villany and Baſeneſs, and therefore cannot commit the ſame without being ſelf-condemned.

Secondly, That we ſhould learn to be cautious leſt we *charge God fooliſhly*, by aſcribring That to him, or the Nature He has given

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ven us, which is owing wholly to our own Abuſe of it. Men may ſpeak of the Degeneracy and Corruption of the World, according to the Experience they have had of it; but Human Nature, conſidered as the divine Workmanſhip, ſhould methinks be treated as ſacred: For *in the Image of God made He Man.* That Paſſion, from whence Men take Occaſion to run into the dreadful Vices of Malice and Revenge; even That Paſſion, as implanted in our Nature by God, is not only innocent, but a generous Movement of Mind. It is in itſelf, and in its Original, no more than Indignation againſt Injury and Wickedneſs: That which is the only Deformity in the Creation, and the only reaſonable Object of Abhorrence and Diſlike. How manifold Evidence have we of the divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, when even Pain in the natural World, and the Paſſion, we have been now conſidering in the Moral, come out Inſtances of it!

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SERMON IX.

Upon Forgiveneſs of Injuries.

MATTH. V. 43, 44.

Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: But I ſay unto you, Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you.

AS God Almighty foreſaw the Irregularities and Diſorders, both natural and moral, which would happen in this State of Things; He hath graciouſly made ſome Proviſion againſt them, by giving us ſeveral Paſſions and Affections, which ariſe from, or whoſe Objects are thoſe Diſorders. Of this Sort are Fear, Reſentment, Compaſſion and others; of which there could

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be no Occaſion or Uſe in a perfect State: But in the preſent we ſhould be expoſed to greater Inconveniences without them; though there are very conſiderable ones, which they themſelves are the Occaſions of. They are Incumbrances indeed, but ſuch as we are obliged to carry about with us, through this various Journey of Life: Some of them as a Guard againſt the violent Aſſaults of others, and in our own Defence; ſome in Behalf of others; and all of them to put us upon, and help to carry us through, a Courſe of Behaviour ſuitable to our Condition, in Default of that Perfection of Wiſdom and Virtue, which would be in all Reſpects our better Security.

THE Paſſion of Anger or Reſentment hath already been largely treated of. It hath been ſhown, that Mankind naturally feel ſome Emotion of Mind againſt Injury and Injuſtice, whoever are the Sufferers by it; and even though the injurious Deſign be prevented from taking Effect. Let this be called Anger, Indignation, Reſentment, or by whatever Name any one ſhall chuſe; the thing itſelf is underſtood, and is plainly natural. It has likewiſe been obſerved, that this natural Indignation is generally moderate and low enough in Mankind, in each particular Man, when the Injury

Injury which excites it doth not affect himſelf, or one whom he conſiders as himſelf. Therefore the Precepts to *forgive*, and to *love our Enemies*, do not relate to that general Indignation againſt Injury and the Authors of it, but to this Feeling, or Reſentment when raiſed by private or perſonal Injury. But no Man could be thought in earneſt, who ſhould aſſert, that, though Indignation againſt Injury, when Others are the Sufferers, is innocent and juſt; yet the ſame Indignation againſt it, when we ourſelves are the Sufferers, becomes faulty and blameable. Theſe Precepts therefore cannot be underſtood to forbid This in the latter Caſe, more than in the former. Nay they cannot be underſtood to forbid this Feeling in the latter Caſe, tho' raiſed to a higher Degree, than in the former: Becauſe, as was alſo obſerved further, from the very Conſtitution of our Nature, we cannot but have a greater Senſibility to what concerns ourſelves. Therefore the Precepts in the Text, and others of the like Import with them, muſt be underſtood to forbid only the Exceſs and Abuſe of this natural Feeling, in Caſes of perſonal and private Injury: The chief Inſtances of which Exceſs and Abuſe have likewiſe been already remarked;

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marked; and all of them, excepting that of Retaliation, do ſo plainly in the very Terms expreſs ſomewhat unreaſonable, diſproportionate and abſurd, as to admit of no Pretence or Shadow of Juſtification.

BUT ſince Cuſtom and falſe Honour are on the Side of Retaliation and Revenge, when the Reſentment is natural and juſt; and Reaſons are ſometimes offered in Juſtification of Revenge in theſe Caſes; and ſince Love of our Enemies is thought *too hard a Saying* to be obeyed: I will ſhew *the abſolute unlawfulneſs of the former*; *The Obligations we are under to the latter*; And then proceed to *ſome Reflections, which may have a more direct and immediate Tendency to beget in us a right Temper of Mind towards thoſe who have offended us.*

IN ſhewing the Unlawfulneſs of Revenge, it is not my preſent Deſign to examine what is alledged in Favour of it, from the Tyranny of Cuſtom and falſe Honour, but only to conſider the Nature and Reaſon of the Thing itſelf; which ought to have prevented, and ought now to extirpate, every thing of that Kind.

Firſt, Let us begin with the Suppoſition of That being innocent, which is pleaded for, and

and which ſhall be ſhewn to be altogether vi- SERM. IX.
cious, the Suppoſition that we were allowed to *render Evil for Evil*, and ſee what would be the Conſequence. Malice or Reſentment towards any Man hath plainly a Tendency to beget the ſame Paſſion in him who is the Object of it; and this again increaſes it in the Other. It is of the very Nature of this Vice to propagate itſelf, not only by way of Example, which it does in common with other Vices, but in a peculiar Way of its own; for Reſentment itſelf, as well as what is done in Conſequence of it, is the Object of Reſentment: Hence it comes to paſs that the firſt Offence, even when ſo ſlight as preſently to be dropt and forgotten, becomes the Occaſion of entring into a long Intercourſe of ill Offices: Neither is it at all uncommon to ſee Perſons, in this Progreſs of Strife and Variance, change Parts; and Him, who was at firſt the injured Perſon, become more injurious and blameable than the Aggreſſor. Put the Caſe then, that the Law of Retaliation was univerſally received, and allowed, as an innocent Rule of Life, by all; and the Obſervance of it thought by many, (and then it would ſoon come to be thought by all,) a Point of Honour:

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nour: This ſuppoſes every Man in private Caſes to paſs Sentence in his own Cauſe; and likewiſe, that Anger or Reſentment is to be the Judge. Thus, from the numberleſs Partialities which we all have for ourſelves, every one would often think himſelf injured when He was not: and in moſt Caſes would repreſent an Injury as much greater than it really is; the imagined Dignity of the Perſon offended would ſcarce ever fail to magnifie the Offence. And, if bare Retaliation, or returning juſt the Miſchief received, always begets Reſentment in the Perſon upon whom we retaliate, what would that Exceſs do? Add to this, that he likewiſe has his Partialities——There is no going on to repreſent this Scene of Rage and Madneſs: It is manifeſt there would be no Bounds, nor any End. *If* the *Beginning of Strife is as when one letteth out Water*, what would it come to when allowed this free and unreſtrained Courſe? *As Coals are to burning Coals, or Wood to Fire; ſo* would theſe *contentious Men be to kindle Strife* *. And, ſince the Indulgence of Revenge hath manifeſtly this Tendency, and does actually produce theſe Effects in Proportion as it is allowed; a Paſſion of ſo dangerous a Nature ought not to be indulged,

indulged, were there no other Reaſon a- SERM. IX.
gainſt it.

Secondly, It hath been ſhewn that the Paſſion of Reſentment was placed in Man, upon Suppoſition of, and as a Prevention or Remedy to Irregularity and Diſorder. Now whether it be allowed or not, that the Paſſion itſelf and the Gratification of it joined together are painful to the malicious Perſon; it muſt however be ſo with Reſpect to the Perſon towards whom it is exerciſed, and upon whom the Revenge is taken. Now, if we conſider Mankind, according to that fine Alluſion of St. *Paul*, as *one Body, and every one Members one of another*; it muſt be allowed that Reſentment is, with Reſpect to Society, a painful Remedy. Thus then the very Notion or Idea of this Paſſion, as a Remedy or Prevention of Evil, and as in itſelf a painful Means, plainly ſhews that it ought never to be made uſe of, but only in order to produce ſome greater Good.

IT is to be obſerved, that this Argument is not founded upon an Alluſion or Simile; but that it is drawn from the very Nature of the Paſſion itſelf, and the End for which it was given us. We are obliged to make

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uſe of Words taken from ſenſible things, to explain what is the moſt remote from them: And every one ſees, from whence the Words Prevention and Remedy are taken. But if you pleaſe, let theſe Words be dropped: The thing itſelf, I ſuppoſe, may be expreſs'd without them.

THAT Mankind is a Community, that we all ſtand in a Relation to each other, that there is a publick End and Intereſt of Society which each Particular is obliged to promote, is the Sum of Morals. Conſider then the Paſſion of Reſentment, as given to this one Body, as given to Society. Nothing can be more manifeſt, than that Reſentment is to be conſidered as a ſecondary Paſſion, placed in us upon Suppoſition, upon Account of, and with Regard to Injury; not, to be ſure, to promote and further it, but to render it, and the Inconveniences and Miſeries ariſing from it, leſs and fewer than they would be without this Paſſion. It is as manifeſt, that the Indulgence of it is, with Regard to Society, a painful Means of obtaining theſe Ends. Conſidered in itſelf, it is very undeſirable, and what Society muſt very much wiſh to be without. It is in every Inſtance abſolutely

abſolutely an Evil in itſelf; becauſe it implies producing Miſery: And conſequently muſt never be indulged or gratified for itſelf, by any one who conſiders Mankind as a Community or Family, and himſelf as a Member of it. SERM. IX.

LET us now take this in another View. Every natural Appetite, Paſſion and Affection, may be gratified in particular Inſtances, without being ſubſervient to the particular chief End, for which theſe ſeveral Principles were reſpectively implanted in our Nature. And, if neither this End, nor any other moral Obligation be contradicted, ſuch Gratification is innocent. Thus, I ſuppoſe, there are Caſes in which each of theſe Principles, this one of Reſentment excepted, may innocently be gratified, without being ſubſervient to what is the main End of it: That is, though it does not conduce to, yet it may be gratified without contradicting that End, or any other Obligation. But the Gratification of Reſentment, if it be not conducive to the End for which it was given us, muſt neceſſarily contradict, not only the general Obligation to Benevolence, but likewiſe that particular End itſelf. The End, for which it was gi-

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ven, is to prevent or remedy Injury; *i. e.* the Miſery occaſioned by Injury; *i. e.* Miſery itſelf: And the Gratification of it conſiſts in producing Miſery; *i. e.* in contradicting the End, for which it was implanted in our Nature.

THIS whole Reaſoning is built upon the Difference there is between this Paſſion and all others. No other Principle, or Paſſion, hath for its End the Miſery of our Fellow-creatures. But Malice and Revenge meditates Evil itſelf; and to do Miſchief, to be the Author of Miſery, is the very Thing which gratifies the Paſſion: This is what it directly tends towards, as its proper Deſign. Other Vices eventually do Miſchief: This alone aims at it as an End.

NOTHING can with Reaſon be urged in Juſtification of Revenge, from the good Effects which the Indulgence of it were before mentioned * to have upon the Affairs of the World; becauſe, though it be a remarkable Inſtance of the Wiſdom of Providence to bring Good out of Evil, yet Vice is Vice to him who is guilty of it. "But ſuppoſe theſe "good Effects are foreſeen:" That is, Suppoſe

* Serm. VIII. p. 152.

poſe Reaſon in a particular Caſe leads a Man the ſame Way as Paſſion? Why then, to be ſure, he ſhould follow his Reaſon, in this as well as in all other Caſes. So that, turn the Matter which way ever you will, no more can be allowed to this Paſſion, than that hath been already *. SERM. IX.

As to that Love of our Enemies, which is commanded; this ſuppoſes the general Obligation to Benevolence or Good-will towards Mankind: And this being ſuppoſed, that Precept is no more than to forgive Injuries; that is, to keep clear of thoſe Abuſes before-mentioned: Becauſe that we have the habitual Temper of Benevolence, is taken for granted.

RESENTMENT is not inconſiſtent with Good-will: For we often ſee both together in very high Degrees; not only in Parents towards their Children, but in Caſes of Friendſhip and Dependance, where there is no natural Relation. Theſe contrary Paſſions, though they may leſſen, do not neceſſarily deſtroy each other. We may therefore love our Enemy, and yet have Reſentment againſt him for his injurious Behaviour towards us. But when this Reſentment in-

* Serm. VIII. p. 151.

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tirely deſtroys our natural Benevolence towards him, it is exceſſive, and becomes Malice or Revenge. The Command, to prevent its having this Effect, *i. e.* to forgive Injuries, is the ſame as to love our Enemies; becauſe that Love is always ſuppoſed, unleſs deſtroyed by Reſentment.

" BUT though Mankind is the natural " Object of Benevolence, yet may it not be " leſſened upon Vice, *i. e.* Injury?" Allowed: But if every Degree of Vice or Injury muſt deſtroy that Benevolence, then no Man is the Object of our Love; for no Man is without Faults.

" BUT if lower Inſtances of Injury may " leſſen our Benevolence, why may not " higher, or the higheſt, deſtroy it?" The Anſwer is obvious. It is not Man's being a ſocial Creature, much leſs his being a moral Agent, from whence *alone* our Obligations to Good-will towards him ariſe. There is an Obligation to it prior to either of theſe, ariſing from his being a ſenſible Creature; that is, capable of Happineſs or Miſery. Now this Obligation cannot be ſuperſeded by his moral Character. What juſtifies publick Executions is, not that the Guilt or Demerit of the Criminal diſpenſes with the Obligation

on of Good-will, neither would this juſtify any Severity; but, that his Life is inconſiſtent with the Quiet and Happineſs of the World: That is, a general and more enlarged Obligation neceſſarily deſtroys a particular and more confined one of the ſame Kind, inconſiſtent with it. Guilt or Injury then does not diſpenſe with or ſuperſede the Duty of Love and Good-will. SERM. IX.

NEITHER does that peculiar Regard to ourſelves, which was before allowed to be natural * to Mankind, diſpenſe with it: Becauſe that can no way innocently heighten our Reſentment againſt thoſe who have been injurious to ourſelves in particular, any otherwiſe than as it heightens our Senſe of the Injury or Guilt; and Guilt, though in the higheſt Degree, does not, as hath been ſhewn, diſpenſe with or ſuperſede the Duty of Love and Good-will.

IF all this be true, what can a Man ſay, who will diſpute the Reaſonableneſs, or the Poſſibility, of obeying the divine Precept we are now conſidering? Let him ſpeak out, and it muſt be thus he will ſpeak. "Mankind, *i. e.* a Creature defective and "faulty, is the proper Object of Good-

* Serm. VIII. p. 144.

SERM. IX. " will, whatever his Faults are, when they " reſpect others; but not when they re- " ſpect me my ſelf." That Men ſhould be *affected* in this Manner, and *act* accordingly, is to be accounted for like other Vices; but to *aſſert* that it *ought*, and *muſt* be thus, is Self-partiality poſſeſs'd of the very Underſtanding.

THUS Love to our Enemies, and thoſe who have been injurious to us, is ſo far from being a *Rant*, as it has been prophanely called, that it is in Truth the Law of our Nature, and what every one muſt ſee and own, who is not quite blinded with Self-love.

FROM hence it is eaſy to ſee, what is the Degree in which we are commanded to love our Enemies, or thoſe who have been injurious to us. It were well if it could as eaſily be reduced to Practice. It cannot be imagined, that we are required to love them with any peculiar Kind of Affection. But ſuppoſe the Perſon injured to have a due, natural Senſe of the Injury, and no more; he ought to be affected towards the injurious Perſon in the ſame Way any good Men, unintereſted in the Caſe, would be; if they had the ſame juſt Senſe, which we have ſuppoſed the injured Perſon to have, of the Fault:

Fault: After which there will yet remain real Good-will towards the Offender. SERM. IX.

NOW what is there in all this, which ſhould be thought impracticable? I am ſure there is nothing in it unreaſonable. It is indeed no more than that we ſhould not indulge a Paſſion, which, if generally indulged, would propagate itſelf ſo as almoſt to lay waſte the World: That we ſhould ſuppreſs that partial, that falſe Self-love, which is the Weakneſs of our Nature: That Uneaſineſs and Miſery ſhould not be produced, without any good Purpoſe to be ſerved by it: And that we ſhould not be affected towards Perſons differently from what their Nature and Character require.

BUT ſince to be convinced that any Temper of Mind, and Courſe of Behaviour, is our Duty, and the contrary vitious, hath but a diſtant Influence upon our Temper and Actions; let me add ſome few Reflections, which may have a more direct Tendency to ſubdue thoſe Vices in the Heart, to beget in us this right Temper, and lead us to a right Behaviour towards thoſe who have offended us: Which Reflections however ſhall be ſuch as will further ſhew the Obligations we are under to it.

No

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No one, I ſuppoſe, would chooſe to have an Indignity put upon him, or to be injuriouſly treated. If then there be any Probability of a Miſunderſtanding in the Caſe, either from our imagining we are injured when we are not, or repreſenting the Injury to ourſelves as greater than it really is; one would hope an Intimation of this Sort might be kindly received, and that People would be glad to find the Injury not ſo great as they imagined. Therefore, without knowing Particulars, I take upon me to aſſure all Perſons who think they have received Indignities or injurious Treatment, that they may depend upon it, as in a Manner certain, that the Offence is not ſo great as they themſelves imagine. We are in ſuch a peculiar Situation, with reſpect to Injuries done to ourſelves, that we can ſcarce any more ſee them as they really are, than our Eye can ſee itſelf. If we could place ourſelves at a due Diſtance, *i. e.* be really unprejudiced, we ſhould frequently diſcern That to be in reality Inadvertence and Miſtake in our Enemy, which we now fancy we ſee to be Malice or Scorn. From this proper point of View, we ſhould likewiſe in all Probability ſee ſomething of theſe latter in ourſelves,

ourſelves, and moſt certainly a great deal of the former. Thus the Indignity or Injury would almoſt infinitely leſſen, and perhaps at laſt come out to be nothing at all. Self-love is a Medium of a peculiar Kind: In theſe Caſes it magnifies every thing which is amiſs in others, at the ſame time that it leſſens every thing amiſs in ourſelves. SERM. IX.

ANGER alſo or Hatred may be conſidered as another falſe Medium of viewing things, which always repreſents Characters and Actions much worſe than they really are. Ill-will not only never ſpeaks, but never thinks well, of the Perſon towards whom it is exerciſed. Thus in Caſes of Offence and Enmity, the whole Character and Behaviour is conſidered with an Eye to that particular Part which has offended us, and the whole Man appears monſtrous, without any thing right or human in him: Whereas the Reſentment ſhould ſurely at leaſt be confined to that particular Part of the Behaviour which gave Offence; ſince the other Parts of a Man's Life and Character ſtand juſt the ſame as they did before.

IN general, there are very few Inſtances of Enmity carried to any length but Inadvertency, Miſunderſtanding, ſome real

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real Miſtake of the Caſe, on one ſide however, if not on both, has a great Share in it.

IF theſe things were attended to, theſe Ill-humours could not be carried to any length amongſt good Men, and they would be exceedingly abated amongſt all. And one would hope they might be attended to: For all that theſe Cautions come to, is really no more than deſiring, that Things may be conſidered and judged of as they are in themſelves, that we ſhould have an Eye to, and beware of, what would otherwiſe lead us into Miſtakes. So that to make Allowances for Inadvertence, Miſunderſtanding, for the Partialities of Self-love, and the falſe Light which Anger ſets things in; I ſay, to make Allowances for theſe, is not to be ſpoken of as an Inſtance of Humbleneſs of Mind, or Meekneſs and Moderation of Temper; but as what common Senſe ſhould ſuggeſt, to avoid judging wrong of a Matter before us, though Virtue and Morals were out of the Caſe. And therefore it as much belongs to ill Men, who will indulge the Vice I have been arguing againſt; as to good Men, who endeavour to ſubdue it in themſelves. In a word, all theſe Cautions, concerning Anger and Self-love,

love, are no more than deſiring a Man, who was looking through a Glaſs which either magnified or leſſened, to take Notice, that the Objects are not in themſelves what they appear through that Medium. SERM. IX.

To all theſe Things one might add, that, Reſentment being out of the Caſe, there is not properly ſpeaking any ſuch Thing as direct Ill-will in one Man towards another: Therefore the firſt Indignity or Injury, if it be not owing to Inadvertence or Miſunderſtanding, may however be reſolved into other particular Paſſions or Self-love: Principles quite diſtinct from Ill-will, and which we ought all to be diſpoſed to excuſe in others, from experiencing ſo much of them in ourſelves. A great Man of Antiquity is reported to have ſaid, that, as He never was indulgent to any one Fault in himſelf, He could not excuſe thoſe of others. This Sentence could ſcarce with Decency come out of the Mouth of any humane Creature. But if we invert the former Part, and put it thus: That He was indulgent to many Faults in himſelf, as it is to be feared the beſt of us are, and yet was implacable; how monſtrous would ſuch an Aſſertion appear? And this is the Caſe in Reſpect to every humane Creature, in Pro-

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portion as He is without the forgiving Spirit I have been recommending.

FURTHER, Though Injury, Injuſtice, Oppreſſion, the Baſeneſs of Ingratitude, are the natural Objects of Indignation, or if you pleaſe of Reſentment, as before explained; yet they are likewiſe the Objects of Compaſſion, as they are their own Puniſhment, and without Repentance will for ever be ſo. No one ever did a deſigned Injury to another, but at the ſame time He did a much greater to himſelf. If therefore we would conſider things juſtly, ſuch an one is, according to the natural Courſe of our Affections, an Object of Compaſſion, as well as of Diſpleaſure: And to be affected really in this manner, I ſay really, in Oppoſition to Show and Pretence, argues the true Greatneſs of Mind. We have an Example of Forgiveneſs in this Way in its utmoſt Perfection, and which indeed includes in it all that is Good, in that Prayer of our Bleſſed Saviour on the Croſs: *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*

BUT *Laſtly*, The Offences which we are all guilty of againſt God, and the Injuries which Men do to each other, are often mentioned together: And, making Allowances for

for the infinite Diſtance between the Majeſty of Heaven, and a frail Mortal, and likewiſe for this, that He cannot poſſibly be affected or moved as we are; Offences committed by others againſt ourſelves, and the Manner in which we are apt to be affected with them, give a real Occaſion for calling to Mind our own Sins againſt God. Now there is an Apprehenſion and Pre-ſentiment, natural to Mankind, that we ourſelves ſhall one Time or other be dealt with, as we deal with others; and a peculiar Acquieſcence in, and Feeling of the Equity and Juſtice of this equal Diſtribution. This natural Notion of Equity the Son of *Sirach* has put in the ſtrongeſt way. * *He that revengeth ſhall find Vengeance from the Lord, and he will ſurely keep his Sins in Remembrance. Forgive thy Neighbour the Hurt he hath done unto thee, ſo ſhall thy Sins alſo be forgiven when thou prayeſt. One Man beareth Hatred againſt another, and doth he ſeek pardon from the Lord? He ſheweth no Mercy to a Man which is like himſelf; and doth He ask Forgiveneſs of his own Sins?* Let any one read our Saviour's Parable of *the King who took Account of his Servants* †; and the Equity and Rightneſs of

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* Ecclus. xxviii. 1—4. † Matth. xviii.

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of the Sentence, which was paſſed upon him who was unmerciful to his Fellow-Servant, will be felt. There is ſomewhat in Humane Nature, which accords to, and falls in with that Method of Determination. Let us then place before our Eyes the Time which is repreſented in the Parable; That of our own Death, or the final Judgment. Suppoſe your ſelves under the Apprehenſions of approaching Death; that you were juſt going to appear naked and without Diſguiſe before the Judge of all the Earth, to give an Account of your Behaviour towards your Fellow-creatures: Could any thing raiſe more dreadful Apprehenſions of that Judgment, than the Reflection that you had been implacable, and without Mercy towards thoſe who had offended you: without that forgiving Spirit towards others, which that it may now be exerciſed towards yourſelves, is your only hope? And theſe natural Apprehenſions are authorized by our Saviour's Application of the Parable: *So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Treſpaſſes.* On the other hand, ſuppoſe a good Man in the ſame Circumſtance, in the laſt Part and Cloſe of Life; conſcious of

of many Frailties, as the beſt are, but conſcious too that He had been meek, forgiving and merciful; that He had in Simplicity of Heart been ready to paſs over Offences againſt himſelf: The having felt this good Spirit will give him, not only a full View of the Amiableneſs of it, but the ſureſt Hope that He ſhall meet with it in his Judge. This likewiſe is confirmed by his own Declaration: *If ye forgive Men their Treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will likewiſe forgive you.* And that we might have a conſtant Senſe of it upon our Mind, the Condition is expreſs'd in our daily Prayer. A forgiving Spirit is therefore abſolutely neceſſary, as ever we hope for Pardon of our own Sins; as ever we hope for Peace of Mind in our dying Moments, or for the divine Mercy at that Day when we ſhall moſt ſtand in need of it.

SERMON X.

Upon Self-Deceit.

2 SAM. xii. 7.

And Nathan *ſaid to* David, *Thou art the Man.*

THESE Words are the Application of *Nathan*'s Parable to *David*, upon Occaſion of his Adultery with *Bathſheba*, and the Murder of *Uriah* her Huſband. The Parable, which is related in the moſt beautiful Simplicity, is this. * *There were two Men in one City; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds: But the poor Man had nothing ſave one little Ew-Lamb, which he had bought and nouriſhed up: And it grew up together with him,*

* Ver. 1.

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and with his Children; it did eat of his own Meat, and drank of his own Cup, and lay in his Bosom, and was unto him as a Daughter. And there came a Traveller unto the rich Man, and he spared to take of his own Flock, and of his own Herd, to dress for the way-faring Man that was come unto him, but took the poor Man's Lamb, and dressed it for the Man that was come to him. And David's *Anger was greatly kindled against the Man, and he said to* Nathan, *As the Lord liveth, the Man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And he shall restore the Lamb four-fold, because he did this thing, and because he had no Pity. David* passes Sentence, not only that there should be a four-fold Restitution made; but he proceeds to the Rigour of Justice, *the Man that hath done this thing shall die:* And this Judgment is pronounced with the utmost Indignation against such an Act of Inhumanity; *As the Lord liveth, he shall surely die: and his Anger was greatly kindled against the Man.* And the Prophet answered, *Thou art the Man.* He had been guilty of much greater Inhumanity, with the utmost Deliberation, Thought and Contrivance. Near a Year

must have paſſed, between the Time of the Commiſſion of his Crimes, and the Time of the Prophet's coming to him; and it does not appear from the Story, that he had in all this while the leaſt Remorſe or Contrition. SERM. X.

THERE is not any thing, relating to Men and Characters, more ſurprizing and unaccountable, than this Partiality to themſelves, which is obſervable in many; as there is nothing of more melancholy Reflection, reſpecting Morality, Virtue and Religion. Hence it is that many Men ſeem perfect Strangers to their own Characters. They think, and reaſon, and judge quite differently upon any Matter relating to themſelves, from what they do in Caſes of Others where they are not intereſted. Hence it is one hears People expoſing Follies, which they themſelves are eminent for; and talking with great Severity againſt particular Vices, which, if all the World be not miſtaken, they themſelves are notoriouſly guilty of. This Self-ignorance and Self-partiality may be in all different Degrees. It is a lower Degree of it, which *David* himſelf refers to in theſe Words, *Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanſe thou me from my ſecret Faults.* This

SERM. X. is the Ground of that Advice of *Elihu* to *Job*: *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, —That which I ſee not, teach thou me; if I have done Iniquity, I will do no more.* And *Solomon* ſaw this thing in a very ſtrong Light, when he ſaid, *He that truſteth his own Heart is a Fool.* This likewiſe was the Reaſon why that Precept, *Know thy ſelf*, was ſo frequently inculcated by the Philoſophers of old. For if it were not for that partial and fond Regard to ourſelves, it would certainly be no great Difficulty to know our own Character, what paſſes within, the Bent and Bias of our Mind; much leſs would there be any Difficulty in judging rightly of our own Actions. But from this Partiality it frequently comes to paſs, that the Obſervation, of many Men's being themſelves laſt of all acquainted with what falls out in their own Families, may be applied to a nearer Home, to what paſſes within their own Breaſts.

THERE is plainly, in the Generality of Mankind, an Abſence of Doubt or Diſtruſt, in a very great Meaſure, as to their moral Character and Behaviour; and likewiſe a Diſpoſition to take for granted, that all is right and well with them in theſe Reſpects. The former is owing to their not reflecting

ing, not exerciſing their Judgment upon themſelves; the latter, to Self-love. I am not ſpeakiug of that Extravagance, which is ſometimes to be met with; Inſtances of Perſons declaring in Words at length, that they never were in the wrong, nor had ever any Diffidence to the Juſtneſs of their Conduct, in their whole Lives. No, theſe People are too far gone to have any thing ſaid to them. The thing before us is indeed of this Kind, but in a lower Degree, and confined to the moral Character; ſomewhat of which we almoſt all of us have, without reflecting upon it. Now conſider how long, and how groſly, a Perſon of the beſt Underſtanding might be impoſed upon by one of whom he had not any Suſpicion, and in whom he placed an intire Confidence; eſpecially if there were Friendſhip and real Kindneſs in the Caſe: Surely this holds even ſtronger with reſpect to that Self we are all ſo fond of. Hence ariſes in Men a Diſregard of Reproof and Inſtruction, Rules of Conduct and moral Diſcipline, which occaſionally come in their Way: A Diſregard, I ſay, of theſe; not in every Reſpect, but in this ſingle one, namely, as what may be of Service to them in particular towards

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mending their own Hearts and Tempers, and making them better Men. It never in earneſt comes into their Thoughts, whether ſuch Admonitions may not relate, and be of Service to themſelves; and this quite diſtinct from a poſitive Perſuaſion to the contrary, a Perſuaſion from Reflection that they are innocent and blameleſs in thoſe Reſpects. Thus we may invert the Obſervation which is ſomewhere made upon *Brutus*, that he never read but in order to make himſelf a better Man. It ſcarce comes into the Thoughts of the Generality of Mankind, that this Uſe is to be made of moral Reflections which they meet with; that this Uſe, I ſay, is to be made of them by Themſelves, for every Body obſerves and wonders that it is not done by Others.

FURTHER, there are Inſtances of Perſons having ſo fixed and ſteady an Eye upon their own Intereſt, whatever they place it in, and the Intereſt of thoſe whom they conſider as themſelves, as in a Manner to regard nothing elſe; their Views are almoſt confined to this alone. Now we cannot be acquainted with, or in any Propriety of Speech be ſaid to know any thing, but what we attend to. If therefore they attend only to one Side, they

they really will not, cannot ſee or know what is to be alledged on the other. Though a Man hath the beſt Eyes in the World, he cannot ſee any Way but that which he turns them. Thus theſe Perſons, without paſſing over the leaſt, the moſt minute Thing which can poſſibly be urged in Favour of themſelves, ſhall overlook intirely the plaineſt and moſt obvious Things on the other Side. And whilſt they are under the Power of this Temper, Thought and Conſideration upon the Matter before them has ſcarce any Tendency to ſet them right: Becauſe they are engaged; and their Deliberation concerning an Action to be done, or Reflection upon it afterwards, is not to ſee whether it be right, but to find out Reaſons to juſtify or palliate it; palliate it, not to others, but to themſelves.

IN ſome there is to be obſerved a general Ignorance of themſelves, and wrong Way of thinking and judging in every thing relating to themſelves; their Fortune, Reputation, every thing in which Self can come in: And this perhaps attended with the righteſt Judgment in all other Matters. In others this Partiality is not ſo general, has not taken hold of the whole Man, but is confined

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SERM. X. to ſome particular favourite Paſſion, Intereſt or Purſuit; ſuppoſe Ambition, Covetouſneſs, or any other. And theſe Perſons may probably judge and determine what is perfectly juſt and proper, even in Things in which they themſelves are concerned, if theſe things have no Relation to their particular favourite Paſſion or Purſuit. Hence ariſes that amazing Incongruity, and ſeeming Inconſiſtency of Character, from whence ſlight Obſervers take it for granted, that the Whole is hypocritical and falſe; not being able otherwiſe to reconcile the ſeveral Parts: Whereas in truth there is real Honeſty, ſo far as it goes. There is ſuch a thing as Men's being honeſt to ſuch a Degree, and in ſuch Reſpects, but no further. And this, as it is true, ſo it is abſolutely neceſſary to be taken Notice of, and allowed them; ſuch general and undiſtinguiſhing Cenſure of their whole Character, as deſigning and falſe, being one main thing which confirms them in their Self-deceit. They know that the whole Cenſure is not true; and ſo take for granted that no Part of it is.

BUT to go on with the Explanation of the thing itſelf: Vice in general conſiſts in having an unreaſonable and too great Regard

gard to ourſelves, in Compariſon of others. Robbery and Murder is never from the Love of Injuſtice or Cruelty, but to gratify ſome other Paſſion, to gain ſome ſuppoſed Advantage: And it is falſe Selfiſhneſs alone, whether cool or paſſionate, which makes a Man reſolutely purſue that End, be it ever ſo much to the Injury of another. But whereas, in common and ordinary Wickedneſs, this Unreaſonableneſs, this Partiality and Selfiſhneſs relates only, or chiefly, to the Temper and Paſſions; in the Characters we are now conſidering, it reaches to the Underſtanding, and influences the very Judgment *. And, beſides that general want of Diſtruſt

* That peculiar Regard for ourſelves, which frequently produces this Partiality of Judgment in our own Favour, may have a quite contrary Effect, and occaſion the utmoſt Diffidence and Diſtruſt of Ourſelves; were it only, as it may ſet us upon a more frequent and ſtrict Survey and Review of our own Character and Behaviour. This Search or Recollection itſelf implies ſomewhat of Diffidence; and the Diſcoveries we make, what is brought to our View, may poſſibly increaſe it. Good-will to Another may either blind our Judgment, ſo as to make us overlook his Faults; or it may put us upon exerciſing that Judgment with greater ſtrictneſs, to ſee whether he is ſo faultleſs and perfect as we wiſh him. If that peculiar Regard to Ourſelves leads us to examine our own Character with this greater Severity, in order really to improve and grow better, it is the moſt commendable Turn of Mind poſſible, and can ſcarce be to Exceſs. But if, as every Thing hath its Counterfeit, we are ſo much employed about ourſelves

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Diſtruſt and Diffidence concerning our own Character, there are, you ſee, two things which may thus prejudice and darken the Underſtanding itſelf: That Over-fondneſs for ourſelves, which we are all ſo liable to; and alſo being under the Power of any particular Paſſion or Appetite, or engaged in any particular Purſuit. And theſe, eſpecially the laſt of the two, may be in ſo great a Degree, as to influence our Judgment, even of other Perſons and their Behaviour. Thus a Man, whoſe Temper is formed to Ambition or Covetouſneſs, ſhall even approve of them ſometimes in others.

THIS ſeems to be in a good Meaſure the Account of Self-partiality and Self-deceit, when traced up to its original. Whether it be, or be not thought ſatisfactory, That there is ſuch a thing is manifeſt; and that it is the Occaſion of great Part of the unreaſonable Behaviour of Men towards each other: That by means of it they palliate their Vices and Follies to themſelves: and that it prevents

ourſelves in order to Diſguiſe what is amiſs, and to make a better Appearance; or if our Attention to ourſelves has chiefly this Effect; it is liable to run up into the greateſt Weakneſs and Exceſs, and is like all other Exceſſes its own Diſappointment: For ſcarce any ſhow themſelves to Advantage, who are over-ſollicitous of doing ſo.

prevents their applying to themſelves thoſe Reproofs and Inſtructions, which they meet with either in Scripture or in moral and religious Diſcourſes, though exactly ſuitable to the State of their own Mind, and the Courſe of their Behaviour. There is one thing further to be added here, that the Temper we diſtinguiſh by Hardneſs of Heart with reſpect to others, joined with this Self-partiality, will carry a Man almoſt any Lengths of Wickedneſs, in the Way of Oppreſſion, hard Uſage of others, and even to plain Injuſtice; without his having, from what appears, any real Senſe at all of it. This indeed was not the general Character of *David:* For he plainly gave Scope to the Affections of Compaſſion and Good-will, as well as to his Paſſions of another Kind.

BUT as ſome Occaſions and Circumſtances lie more open to this Self-deceit, and give it greater Scope and Opportunities than others, theſe require to be particularly mentioned.

IT is to be obſerved then, that as there are expreſs determinate Acts of Wickedneſs, ſuch as Murder, Adultery, Theft: So on the other hand, there are numberleſs Caſes in which the Vice and Wickedneſs cannot be exactly

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WHOEVER will conſider the whole Commerce of Humane Life, will ſee that a great Part, perhaps the greateſt Part, of the Intercourſe amongſt Mankind, cannot be reduced to fixed determinate Rules. Yet in theſe Caſes there is a Right and a Wrong: A merciful, a liberal, a kind and compaſſionate Behaviour, which ſurely is our Duty; and an unmerciful contracted Spirit, an hard and oppreſſive Courſe of Behaviour, which is moſt certainly immoral and vitious. But who can define preciſely, wherein that contracted Spirit and hard Uſage of others conſiſt, as Murder and Theft may be defined? There is not a Word in our Language, which expreſſes more deteſtable Wickedneſs than *Oppreſſion*: Yet the Nature of this Vice cannot be ſo exactly ſtated, nor the Bounds of

of it ſo determinately marked, as that we ſhall be able to ſay in all Inſtances, where rigid Right and Juſtice ends, and Oppreſſion begins. In theſe Caſes there is great Latitude left, for every one to determine for, and conſequently to deceive himſelf. It is chiefly in theſe Caſes that Self-deceit comes in; as every one muſt ſee that there is much larger Scope for it here, than in expreſs, ſingle, determinate Acts of Wickedneſs. However it comes in with reſpect to the *Circumſtances* attending the moſt groſs and determinate Acts of Wickedneſs. Of this, the Story of *David*, now before us, affords the moſt aſtoniſhing Inſtance. It is really prodigious, to ſee a Man, before ſo remarkable for Virtue and Piety, going on deliberately from Adultery to Murder, with the ſame cool Contrivance, and, from what appears, with as little Diſturbance, as a Man would endeavour to prevent the ill Conſequences of a Miſtake he had made in any common Matter. That total Inſenſibility of Mind with reſpect to thoſe horrid Crimes, after the Commiſſion of them, manifeſtly ſhews that he did ſome way or other delude himſelf: And this could not be with reſpect to the Crimes themſelves, they were ſo manifeſtly

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festly of the groſſeſt Kind. What the particular Circumſtances were, with which he extenuated them, and quieted and deceived himſelf, is not related.

HAVING thus explained the Nature of internal Hypocriſy and Self-deceit, and remarked the Occaſions upon which it exerts itſelf; there are ſeveral Things further to be obſerved concerning it: That all of the Sources, to which it was traced up, are ſometimes obſervable together in one and the ſame Perſon; But that one of them is more remarkable, and to a higher Degree, in ſome, and others of them are ſo in others: That in general it is a complicated Thing; and may be in all different Degrees and Kinds: That the Temper itſelf is eſſentially in its own Nature vitious and immoral. It is Unfairneſs; it is Diſhoneſty; it is Falſeneſs of Heart: And is therefore ſo far from extenuating Guilt, that it is itſelf the greateſt of all Guilt in Proportion to the Degree it prevails; for it is a Corruption of the whole moral Character in its Principle. Our Underſtanding, and Senſe of Good and Evil, is the Light and Guide of Life: *If therefore* this *Light that is in thee be Darkneſs, how great*

great is that Darkneſs? * For this Reaſon our Saviour puts an *evil Eye* as the direct oppoſite to a *ſingle Eye*; the Abſence of that Simplicity, which theſe laſt Words imply, being itſelf evil and vitious. And whilſt Men are under the Power of this Temper, in Proportion ſtill to the Degree they are ſo, they are fortified on every Side againſt Conviction: And when they hear the Vice and Folly of what is in Truth their own Courſe of Life, expoſed in the juſteſt and ſtrongeſt Manner, they will often aſſent to it, and even carry the Matter further; perſuading themſelves, one does not know how, but ſome Way or other perſuading themſelves, that they are out of the Caſe, and that it hath no Relation to them. Yet, notwithſtanding this, there *frequently appears* a Suſpicion, that all is not right, or as it ſhould be; and perhaps there *is always* at bottom ſomewhat of this Sort. There are doubtleſs many Inſtances of the Ambitious, the Revengeful, the Covetous, and thoſe whom with too great Indulgence we only call the Men of Pleaſure, who will not allow themſelves to think how guilty they are, who explain and

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* Matth. vi. 23.

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argue away their Guilt to Themſelves: And though they do really impoſe upon Themſelves in ſome Meaſure, yet there are none of them but have, if not a proper Knowledge, yet at leaſt, an implicit Suſpicion, where the Weakneſs lies, and what Part of their Behaviour they have Reaſon to wiſh unknown or forgotten for ever. Truth, and real good Senſe, and thorough Integrity, carry along with them a peculiar Conſciouſneſs of their own Genuineneſs: There is a Feeling belonging to them, which does not accompany their Counterfeits, Error, Folly, Half-Honeſty, partial and ſlight Regards to Virtue and Right, ſo far only as they are conſiſtent with that Courſe of Gratification which Men happen to be ſet upon. And, if this be the Caſe; it is much the ſame, as if we ſhould ſuppoſe a Man to have had a general View of ſome Scene, enough to ſatisfy him that it was very diſagreeable, and then to ſhut his Eyes, that he might not have a particular or diſtinct View of its ſeveral Deformities. It is as eaſy to cloſe the Eyes of the Mind, as thoſe of the Body: And the former is more frequently done with Wilfulneſs, and yet not attended to, than the latter; the Actions of the Mind being more quick

quick and tranſient, than thoſe of the Senſes. This may be further illuſtrated by another thing obſervable in ordinary Life. It is not uncommon for Perſons, who run out their Fortunes, intirely to neglect looking into the State of their Affairs, and this from a general Knowledge, that the Condition of them is bad. Theſe extravagant People are perpetually ruined before they themſelves expected it: And they tell you for an Excuſe, and tell you truly, that they did not think they were ſo much in Debt, or that their Expences ſo far exceeded their Income. And yet no one will take this for an Excuſe, who is ſenſible that their Ignorance of their particular Circumſtances was owing to their general Knowledge of them; that is, their general Knowledge, that Matters were not well with them, prevented their looking into Particulars. There is ſomewhat of the like Kind with this, in Reſpect to Morals, Virtue, and Religion. Men find that the Survey of themſelves, their own Heart and Temper, their own Life and Behaviour, doth not afford them Satisfaction: things are not as they ſhould be: Therefore they turn away, will not go over Particulars, or look deeper, leſt they ſhould find more

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amiſs. For who would chooſe to be put out of Humour with himſelf? No one ſurely, if it were not in order to mend, and to be more thoroughly and better pleaſed with himſelf for the future.

IF this ſincere Self-Enjoyment and Home-Satisfaction be thought deſirable, and worth ſome Pains and Diligence; the following Reflections will, I ſuppoſe, deſerve your Attention; as what may be of Service and Aſſiſtance to all who are in any Meaſure honeſtly diſpoſed, for avoiding that fatal Self-deceit, and towards getting acquainted with themſelves.

THE *firſt* is, that thoſe who have never had any Suſpicion of, who have never made Allowances for this Weakneſs in themſelves, who have never (if I may be allowed ſuch a manner of ſpeaking) caught themſelves in it, may almoſt take for granted that they have been very much miſled by it. For conſider: Nothing is more manifeſt, than that Affection and Paſſion of all Kinds influence the Judgment. Now as we have naturally a greater Regard to ourſelves than to others, as the private Affection is more prevalent than the publick; the former will have proportionally a greater Influence upon

on the Judgment, upon our Way of consi- SERM. X.
dering things. People are not backward in owing this Partiality of Judgment, in Caſes of Friendſhip and natural Relation. The Reaſon is obvious, why it is not ſo readily acknowledged, when the Intereſt which miſleads us is more confined, confined to ourſelves: But we all take Notice of it in each other in theſe Caſes. There is not any Obſervation more common, than that there is no judging of a Matter from hearing only one Side. This is not founded upon Suppoſition, at leaſt it is not always, of a formed Deſign in the Relater to deceive: For it holds in Caſes, where he expects that the Whole will be told over again by the other Side. But the Suppoſition, which this Obſervation is founded upon, is the very thing now before us; namely, that Men are exceedingly prone to deceive themſelves, and judge too favourably in every Reſpect, where Themſelves, and their own Intereſt are concerned. Thus, though we have not the leaſt Reaſon to ſuſpect that ſuch an intereſted Perſon hath any Intention to deceive us, yet we of Courſe make great Allowances for his having deceived himſelf. If this be general, almoſt univerſal, it is prodigious that every

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Man can think himſelf an Exception, and that he is free from this Self-partiality. The direct contrary is the Truth. Every Man may take for granted that he has a great deal of it, till, from the ſtricteſt Obſervation upon himſelf, he finds particular Reaſon to think otherwiſe.

Secondly, There is one eaſy and almoſt ſure Way to avoid being miſled by this Self-partiality, and to get acquainted with our real Character: To have regard to the ſuſpicious Part of it, and keep a ſteady Eye over ourſelves in that Reſpect. Suppoſe then a Man fully ſatisfied with himſelf, and his own Behaviour; ſuch an one, if you pleaſe, as the Phariſee in the Goſpel, or a better Man—Well, but allowing this good Opinion you have of your ſelf to be true, yet every one is liable to be miſrepreſented. Suppoſe then an Enemy were to ſet about defaming you, what Part of your Character would he ſingle out? What particular Scandal, think you, would he be moſt likely to fix upon you? And what would the World be moſt ready to believe? There is ſcarce a Man living, but could, from the moſt tranſient ſuperficial View of himſelf, anſwer this Queſtion. What is that ill Thing, that faulty Behaviour,

Behaviour, which I am apprehenſive an Ene- SERM. my, who was thoroughly acquainted with me, would be moſt likely to lay to my Charge, and which the World would be moſt apt to believe? It is indeed poſſible that a Man may not be guilty in that Reſpect. All that I ſay is, let him in Plainneſs and Honeſty fix upon that Part of his Character for a particular Survey and Reflection; and by this he will come to be acquainted, whether he be guilty or innocent in that Reſpect, and how far he is one or the other. X.

Thirdly, It would very much prevent our being miſled by this Self-partiality, to reduce that practical Rule of our Saviour, *Whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do to you, even ſo do unto them*, to our Judgment, and Way of thinking. This Rule, you ſee, conſiſts of two Parts. One is, to ſubſtitute another for yourſelf, when you take a Survey of any Part of your Behaviour, or conſider what is proper and fit and reaſonable for you to do upon any Occaſion: The other Part is, that you ſubſtitute yourſelf in the room of another; conſider yourſelf as the Perſon affected by ſuch a Behaviour, or towards whom ſuch an Action is done: And then you would not only ſee, but like-

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wiſe feel, the Reaſonableneſs or Unreaſonableneſs of ſuch an Action or Behaviour. But alas, the Rule itſelf may be diſhoneſtly applied: There are Perſons, who have not Impartiality enough with reſpect to themſelves, nor regard enough for others, to be able to make a juſt Application of it. This juſt Application, if Men would honeſtly make it, is in Effect all that I have been recommending; it is the whole Thing, the direct contrary to that inward Diſhoneſty as reſpecting our Intercourſe with our Fellow-creatures. And even the Bearing this Rule in their Thoughts, may be of ſome Service; the Attempt thus to apply it, is an Attempt towards being fair and impartial, and may chance unawares to ſhew them to themſelves, to ſhew them the Truth of the Caſe they are conſidering.

UPON the whole it is manifeſt, that there is ſuch a thing as this Self-partiality and Self-deceit: That in ſome Perſons it is to a Degree which would be thought incredible, were not the Inſtances before our Eyes; of which the Behaviour of *David* is perhaps the higheſt poſſible one, in a ſingle particular Caſe; for there is not the leaſt Appearance, that it reached his general

ral Character: That we are almoſt all of us influenced by it in ſome Degree, and in ſome Reſpects: That therefore every one ought to have an Eye to and beware of it. And all that I have further to add upon this Subject is, that either there is a Difference between Right and Wrong, or there is not: Religion is true, or it is not. If it be not, there is no Reaſon for any Concern about it: But if it be true, it requires real Fairneſs of Mind and Honeſty of Heart. And, if People will be wicked, they had better of the two be ſo from the common vitious Paſſions without ſuch Refinements, than from this deep and calm Source of Deluſion; which undermines the whole Principle of Good; darkens that Light, that *Candle of the Lord within*, which is to direct our Steps; and corrupts Conſcience, which is the Guide of Life.

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SERMON XI.

Upon the Love of our Neighbour.

Preached on *Advent* Sunday.

ROM. xiii. 9.

And if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.

IT is commonly obſerved, that there is a Diſpoſition in Men to complain of the Vitiouſneſs and Corruption of the Age in which they live, as greater than that of former ones; which is uſually followed with this further Obſervation, that Mankind has been in that reſpect much the ſame in all Times. Now not to determine whether this laſt be not contradicted by the Accounts of

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of Hiſtory; thus much can ſcarce be doubted, that Vice and Folly takes different Turns, and ſome particular Kinds of it are more open and avowed in ſome Ages than in others: And, I ſuppoſe, it may be ſpoken of as very much the Diſtinction of the preſent, to profeſs a contracted Spirit, and greater Regards to Self-intereſt, than appears to have been done formerly. Upon this Account it ſeems worth while to inquire, whether private Intereſt is likely to be promoted in Proportion to the Degree in which Self-love engroſſes us, and prevails over all other Principles; *or whether the contracted Affection may not poſſibly be ſo prevalent as to diſappoint itſelf, and even contradict its own End, private Good.*

AND ſince further, there is generally thought to be ſome peculiar Kind of Contrariety between Self-love and the Love of our Neighbour, between the Purſuit of publick and of private Good; inſomuch that when you are recommending one of theſe, you are ſuppoſed to be ſpeaking againſt the other; and from hence ariſes a ſecret Prejudice againſt, and frequently open Scorn of all Talk of publick Spirit, and real Good-will to our Fellow-creatutes; it will

will be neceſſary to *inquire what Reſpect Benevolence hath to Self-love, and the Purſuit of private Intereſt, to the Purſuit of publick:* Or whether there be any thing of that peculiar Inconſiſtence and Contrariety between them, over and above what there is between Self-love and other Paſſions and particular Affections, and their reſpective Purſuits. SERM. XI.

THESE Inquiries, it is hoped, may be favourably attended to: For there ſhall be all poſſible Conceſſions made to the favourite Paſſion, which hath ſo much allowed to it, and whoſe Cauſe is ſo univerſally pleaded: It ſhall be treated with the utmoſt Tenderneſs, and Concern for its Intereſts.

IN order to this, as well as to determine the forementioned Queſtions, it will be neceſſary to *conſider the Nature, the Object and End of that Self-love, as diſtinguiſhed from other Principles or Affections in the Mind, and their reſpective Objects.*

EVERY Man hath a general Deſire of his own Happineſs; and likewiſe a Variety of particular Affections, Paſſions and Appetites to particular external Objects. The former proceeds from, or is Self-love; and ſeems inſeparable from all ſenſible Creatures, who can reflect upon themſelves and their own Intereſt

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Intereſt or Happineſs, ſo as to have that Intereſt an Object to their Minds: What is to be ſaid of the latter is, that they proceed from, or together make up that particular Nature, according to which Man is made. The Object the former purſues is ſomewhat internal, our own Happineſs, Enjoyment, Satisfaction; whether we have, or have not a diſtinct particular Perception what it is, or wherein it conſiſts: The Objects of the latter are this or that particular external Thing, which the Affections tend towards, and of which it hath always a particular Idea or Perception. The Principle we call Self-love never ſeeks any Thing external for the ſake of the Thing, but only as a Means of Happineſs or Good: Particular Affections reſt in the external Things themſelves. One belongs to Man as a reaſonable Creature reflecting upon his own Intereſt or Happineſs. The other, though quite diſtinct from Reaſon, are as much a Part of Humane Nature.

THAT all particular Appetites and Paſſions are towards *external Things themſelves*, diſtinct from the *Pleaſure ariſing from them*, is manifeſted from hence; that there could not be this Pleaſure, were it not for that prior

prior Suitableneſs between the Object and the Paſſion: There could be no Enjoyment or Delight from one Thing more than another, from eating Food more than from ſwallowing a Stone, if there were not an Affection or Appetite to one thing more than another. SERM. XI.

EVERY particular Affection, even the Love of our Neighbour, is as really our own Affection, as Self-love; and the Pleaſure ariſing from its Gratification is as much my own Pleaſure, as the Pleaſure Self-love would have, from knowing I my ſelf ſhould be happy ſome time hence, would be my own Pleaſure. And if, becauſe every particular Affection is a Man's own, and the Pleaſure ariſing from its Gratification his own Pleaſure, or Pleaſure to himſelf, ſuch particular Affection muſt be called Self-love; according to this way of ſpeaking, no Creature whatever can poſſibly act but merely from Self-love; and every Action and every Affection whatever is to be reſolved up into this one Principle. But then this is not the Language of Mankind: Or if it were, we ſhould want Words to expreſs the Difference, between the Principle of an Action, proceeding from cool Conſideration that it will be

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be to my own Advantage; and an Action, ſuppoſe of Revenge, or of Friendſhip, by which a Man runs upon certain Ruin, to do Evil or Good to another. It is manifeſt the Principles of theſe Actions are totally different, and ſo want different Words to be diſtinguiſhed by: All that they agree in is, that they both proceed from, and are done to gratify an Inclination in a Man's Self. But the Principle or Inclination in one Caſe is Self-love; in the other, Hatred or Love of another. There is then a Diſtinction between the cool Principle of Self-love, or general Deſire of our own Happineſs, as one Part of our Nature, and one Principle of Action; and the particular Affections towards particular external Objects, as another Part of our Nature, and another Principle of Action. How much ſoever therefore is to be allowed for Self-love, yet it cannot be allowed to be the Whole of our inward Conſtitution; becauſe, you ſee, there are other Parts or Principles which come into it.

FURTHER, private Happineſs or Good is all which Self-love can make us deſire, or be concerned about: In having this conſiſts its Gratification: It is an Affection to ourſelves; a Regard to our own Intereſt, Happineſs

pineſs, and private Good: And in the Pro- SERM. portion a Man hath this, he is intereſted, or a Lover of himſelf. Let this be kept in Mind; becauſe there is commonly, as I ſhall preſently have Occaſion to obſerve, another Senſe put upon theſe Words. On the other Hand, particular Affections tend towards particular external things: Theſe are their Objects: Having theſe is their End: In this conſiſts their Gratification: No Matter whether it be, or be not, upon the Whole, our Intereſt or Happineſs. An Action done from the former of theſe Principles is called an intereſted Action. An Action proceeding from any of the latter has its Denomination of paſſionate, ambitious, friendly, revengeful, or any other, from the particular Appetite or Affection from which it proceeds. Thus Self-love as one Part of Humane Nature, and the ſeveral particular Principles as the other Part, are, Themſelves, their Objects and Ends, ſtated and ſhewn.

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FROM hence it will be eaſy to ſee, how far, and in what Ways, each of theſe can contribute and be ſubſervient to the private Good of the Individual. Happineſs does not conſiſt in Self-love. The Deſire of Happineſs is

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no more the Thing itſelf, than the Deſire of Riches is the Poſſeſſion or Enjoyment of them. People may love themſelves with the moſt entire and unbounded Affection, and yet be extreamly miſerable. Neither can Self-love any way help them out, but by ſetting them on work to get rid of the Cauſes of their Miſery, to gain or make uſe of thoſe Objects which are by Nature adapted to afford Satisfaction. Happineſs or Satisfaction conſiſts only in the Enjoyment of thoſe Objects, which are by Nature ſuited to our ſeveral particular Appetites, Paſſions and Affections. So that if Self-love wholly engroſſes us, and leaves no room for any other Principle, there can be abſolutely no ſuch thing at all as Happineſs, or Enjoyment of any Kind whatever; ſince Happineſs conſiſts in the Gratification of particular Paſſions, which ſuppoſes the having of them. Self-love then does not conſtitute *This* or *That* to be our Intereſt or Good; but, our Intereſt or Good being conſtituted by Nature and ſuppoſed, Self-love only puts us upon obtaining and ſecuring it. Therefore, if it be poſſible, that Self-love may prevail and exert itſelf in a Degree or Manner which is not ſubſervient to this

this End; then it will not follow, that our Intereſt will be promoted in Proportion to the Degree in which that Principle engroſſes us, and prevails over others. Nay further, the private and contracted Affection, when it is not ſubſervient to this End private Good, may, for any thing that appears, have a direct contrary Tendency and Effect. And if we will conſider the Matter, we ſhall ſee that it often really has. *Diſengagement* is abſolutely neceſſary to Enjoyment: And a Perſon may have ſo ſteady and fixed an Eye upon his own Intereſt, whatever he places it in, as may hinder him from *attending* to many Gratifications within his reach, which others have their Minds *free* and *open* to. Over-fondneſs for a Child is not generally thought to be for its Advantage: And, if there be any Gueſs to be made from Appearances, ſurely that Character we call Selfiſh is not the moſt promiſing for Happineſs. Such a Temper may plainly be and exert itſelf in a Degree and Manner which may give unneceſſary and uſeleſs Sollicitude and Anxiety, in a Degree and Manner which may prevent obtaining the Means and Materials of Enjoyment, as well as the making uſe of them. Immoderate Self-love does very

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ill conſult its own Intereſt: And, how much ſoever a Paradox it may appear, it is certainly true, that even from Self-love we ſhould endeavour to get over all inordinate Regard to, and Conſideration of ourſelves. Every one of our Paſſions and Affections hath its natural Stint and Bound, which may eaſily be exceeded; whereas our Enjoyments can poſſibly be but in a determinate Meaſure and Degree. Therefore ſuch Exceſs of the Affection, ſince it cannot procure any Enjoyment, muſt in all Caſes be uſeleſs; but is generally attended with Inconveniences, and often is downright Pain and Miſery. This holds as much with regard to Self-love as to all other Affections. The natural Degree of it, ſo far as it ſets us on work to gain and make uſe of the Materials of Satisfaction, may be to our real Advantage; but beyond or beſides this, it is in ſeveral Reſpects an Inconvenience and Diſadvantage. Thus it appears, that private Intereſt is ſo far from being likely to be promoted in Proportion to the Degree in which Self-love engroſſes us, and prevails over all other Principles; that *the contracted Affection may be ſo prevalent as to diſappoint itſelf, and*

and even contradict its own End, private Good.

"BUT who, except the moſt ſordidly Co-
"vetous, ever thought there was any Ri-
"valſhip between the Love of Greatneſs,
"Honour, Power, or between ſenſual Ap-
"petites, and Self-love? No, there is a per-
"fect Harmony between them. It is by
"means of theſe particular Appetites and
"Affections that Self-love is gratified in En-
"joyment, Happineſs and Satisfaction. The
"Competition and Rivalſhip is between
"Self-love, and the Love of our Neighbour:
"That Affection which leads us out of our-
"ſelves, makes us regardleſs of our own
"Intereſt, and ſubſtitute that of another in
"its ſtead." Whether then there be any peculiar Competition and Contrariety in this Caſe, ſhall now be conſidered.

SELF-LOVE and Intereſtedneſs was ſtated to conſiſt in or be an Affection to ourſelves, a Regard to our own private Good: It is therefore diſtinct from Benevolence, which is an Affection to the Good of our Fellow-creatures. But that Benevolence is diſtinct from, that is, not the ſame thing with Self-love, is no Reaſon for its being looked upon with any peculiar Suſpicion; becauſe

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every Principle whatever, by means of which Self-love is gratified, is diſtinct from it: And all things which are diſtinct from each other, are equally ſo. A Man has an Affection or Averſion to another: That one of theſe tends to and is gratified by doing Good, that the other tends too and is gratified by doing Harm, does not in the leaſt alter the Reſpect which either one or the other of theſe inward Feelings has to Self-love. We uſe the Word *Property* ſo as to exclude any other Perſons having an Intereſt in that of which we ſay a particular Man has the Property. And we often uſe the Word *Selfiſh* ſo as to exclude in the ſame Manner all Regards to the Good of Others. But the Caſes are not parallel: For though That Excluſion is really Part of the Idea of Property; yet ſuch poſitive Excluſion, or bringing this peculiar Diſregard to the Good of Others into the Idea of Self-love, is in reality adding to the Idea, or changing it from what it was before ſtated to conſiſt in, namely, in an Affection to Ourſelves *. This being the whole Idea of Self-love, it can no otherwiſe exclude Good-will or Love of Others, than merely by not including it, no otherwiſe,

* p. 208.

otherwiſe, than it excludes Love of Arts or Reputation, or of any thing elſe. Neither on the other hand does Benevolence, any more than Love of Arts or of Reputation, exclude Self-love. Love of our Neighbour then has juſt the ſame Reſpect to, is no more diſtant from Self-love, than Hatred of our Neighbour, or than Love or Hatred of any thing elſe. Thus the Principles, from which Men ruſh upon certain Ruin for the Deſtruction of an Enemy, and for the Preſervation of a Friend, have the ſame Reſpect to the private Affection, and are equally intereſted, or equally diſintereſted: And it is of no Avail, whether they are ſaid to be one or the other. Therefore to thoſe who are ſhocked to hear Virtue ſpoken of as diſintereſted, it may be allowed that it is indeed abſurd to ſpeak thus of it; unleſs Hatred, ſeveral particular Inſtances of Vice, and all the common Affections and Averſions in Mankind, are acknowledged to be diſintereſted too. Is there any leſs Inconſiſtence, between the Love of inanimate Things, or of Creatures meerly ſenſitive, and Self-love; than between Self-love, and the Love of our Neighbour? Is Deſire of and Delight in the Happineſs of another any more a Diminution of

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Self-love, than Deſire of and Delight in the Eſteem of another? They are both equally Deſire of and Delight in ſomewhat external to ourſelves: Either both or neither are ſo. The Object of Self-love is expreſſed in the Term, Self: And every Appetite of Senſe, and every particular Affection of the Heart, are equally intereſted or diſintereſted, becauſe the Objects of them all are equally Self or ſomewhat elſe. Whatever Ridicule therefore the mention of a diſintereſted Principle or Action may be ſuppoſed to lie open to, muſt, upon the Matter being thus ſtated, relate to Ambition, and every Appetite and particular Affection, as much as to Benevolence. And indeed all the Ridicule, and all the grave Perplexity, of which this Subject hath had its full Share, is meerly from Words. The moſt intelligible Way of ſpeaking of it ſeems to be this: That Self-love, and the Actions done in conſequence of it (for theſe will preſently appear to be the ſame as to this Queſtion) are intereſted; that particular Affections towards external Objects, and the Actions done in conſequence of thoſe Affections, are not ſo. But every one is at Liberty to uſe Words as he pleaſes. All that is here inſiſted upon is,

that

that Ambition, Revenge, Benevolence, all particular Paſſions whatever, and the Actions they produce, are equally intereſted or diſintereſted.

THUS it appears that there is no peculiar Contrariety between Self-love and Benevolence; no greater Competition between theſe, than between any other particular Affections and Self-love. This relates to the Affections themſelves. Let us now ſee whether there be any peculiar Contrariety between the reſpective Courſes of Life which theſe Affections lead to; whether there be any greater Competition between the Purſuit of private and of publick Good, than between any other particular Purſuits and that of private Good.

THERE ſeems no other Reaſon to ſuſpect that there is any ſuch peculiar Contrariety, but only that the Courſes of Action which Benevolence leads to, has a more direct Tendency to promote the Good of Others, than that Courſe of Action which Love of Reputation, ſuppoſe, or any other particular Affection leads to. But that any Affection tends to the Happineſs of Another, does not hinder its tending to one's own Happineſs too. That Others enjoy the Benefit

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nefit of the Air and the Light of the Sun, does not hinder but that theſe are as much one's own private Advantage now, as they would be if we had the Property of them excluſive of all Others. So a Purſuit which tends to promote the Good of Another, yet may have as great Tendency to promote private Intereſt, as a Purſuit which does not tend to the Good of Another at all, or which is Miſchievous to him. All particular Affections whatever, Reſentment, Benevolence, Love of Arts, equally lead to a Courſe of Action for their own Gratification, *i. e.* the Gratification of Ourſelves; and the Gratification of each gives Delight: So far then 'tis manifeſt they have all the ſame Reſpect to private Intereſt. Now take into Conſideration further concerning theſe three Purſuits, that the End of the firſt is the Harm, of the ſecond, the Good of Another, of the laſt, ſomewhat indifferent; and is there any Neceſſity, that theſe additional Conſiderations ſhould alter the Reſpect, which we before ſaw theſe three Purſuits had to private Intereſt; or render any one of them leſs conducive to it, than any other? Thus One Man's Affection is to Honour as his End; in order to obtain

tain which, he thinks no Pains too great. Suppoſe another with ſuch a Singularity of Mind, as to have the ſame Affection to publick Good as his End, which he endeavours with the ſame Labour to obtain. In Caſe of Succeſs, ſurely the Man of Benevolence hath as great Enjoyment as the Man of Ambition; they both equally having the End their Affections, in the ſame Degree, tended to: But in Caſe of Diſappointment, the benevolent Man has clearly the Advantage; ſince endeavouring to do Good conſidered as a Virtuous Purſuit, is gratified by its own Conſciouſneſs, *i. e.* is in a Degree its own Reward. SERM. XI.

AND as to theſe two, or Benevolence and any other particular Paſſions whatever, conſidered in a further View, as forming a general Temper, which more or leſs diſpoſes us for Enjoyment of all the common Bleſſings of Life, diſtinct from their own Gratification: Is Benevolence leſs the Temper of Tranquillity and Freedom than Ambition or Covetouſneſs? Does the benevolent Man appear leſs eaſy with himſelf, from his Love to his Neighbour? Does he leſs reliſh his Being? Is there any peculiar Gloom ſeated on his Face? Is his Mind leſs open to Entertainment,

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tainment, to any particular Gratification? Nothing is more manifeſt, than that being in Good-humour, which is Benevolence whilſt it laſts, is itſelf the Temper of Satisfaction and Enjoyment.

SUPPOSE then a Man ſitting down to conſider how he might become moſt eaſy to himſelf, and attain the greateſt Pleaſure he could; all that which is his real natural Happineſs. This can only conſiſt in the Enjoyment of thoſe Objects, which are by Nature adapted to our ſeveral Faculties. Theſe particular Enjoyments make up the Sum Total of our Happineſs: And they are ſuppoſed to ariſe from Riches, Honours, and the Gratification of ſenſual Appetites: Be it ſo: Yet none profeſs themſelves ſo compleatly happy in theſe Enjoyments, but that there is room left in the Mind for others, if they were preſented to them: Nay theſe, as much as they engage us, are not thought ſo high, but that Humane Nature is capable even of greater. Now there have been Perſons in all Ages, who have profeſs'd that they found Satisfaction in the Exerciſe of Charity, in the Love of their Neighbour, in endeavouring to promote the Happineſs of all they had to do with, and in the Purſuit

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of what is juſt and right and good, as the general Bent of their Mind, and End of their Life; and that doing an Action of Baſeneſs or Cruelty, would be as great Violence to *their* Self, as much breaking in upon their Nature, as any external Force. Perſons of this Character would add, if they might be heard, that they conſider themſelves as acting in the View of an infinite Being, who is in a much higher Senſe the Object of Reverence and of Love, than all the World beſides; and therefore they could have no more Enjoyment from a wicked Action done under his Eye, than the Perſons to whom they are making their Apology could, if all Mankind were the Spectators of it; and that the Satisfaction of approving themſelves to His unerring Judgment, to whom they thus refer all their Actions, is a more continued ſettled Satisfaction than any this World can afford; as alſo that they have, no leſs than Others, a Mind free and open to all the common innocent Gratifications of it, ſuch as they are. And if we go no further, does there appear any Abſurdity in this? Will any one take upon him to ſay, that a Man cannot find his Account in this general Courſe of Life, as much as in the moſt unbounded Ambition, SERM. XI.

SERM. XI. Ambition, and the Exceſſes of Pleaſure? Or that ſuch a Perſon has not conſulted ſo well for Himſelf, for the Satisfaction and Peace of his own Mind, as the ambitious or diſſolute Man? And though the Conſideration, that God himſelf will in the End juſtify their Taſte, and ſupport their Cauſe, is not formally to be inſiſted upon here; yet thus much comes in, that all Enjoyments whatever are much more clear and unmixt from the Aſſurance that they will end well. Is it certain then that there is nothing in theſe Pretenſions to Happineſs? eſpecially when there are not wanting Perſons, who have ſupported themſelves with Satisfactions of this Kind in Sickneſs, Poverty, Diſgrace, and in the very Pangs of Death; whereas it is manifeſt all other Enjoyments fail in theſe Circumſtances. This ſurely looks ſuſpicious of having ſomewhat in it. Self-love methinks ſhould be alarmed. May ſhe not poſſibly paſs over greater Pleaſures, than thoſe ſhe is ſo wholly taken up with?

THE ſhort of the Matter is no more than this. Happineſs conſiſts in the Gratification of certain Affections, Appetites, Paſſions, with Objects which are by Nature adapted to them. Self-love may indeed ſet us on work

work to gratify theſe: But Happineſs or Enjoyment has no immediate Connection with Self-love, but ariſes from ſuch Gratification alone. Love of our Neighbour is one of thoſe Affections. This, conſidered as a *virtuous Principle*, is gratified by a Conſciouſneſs of *endeavouring* to promote the Good of others; but conſidered as a natural Affection, its Gratification conſiſts in the actual Accompliſhment of this Endeavour. Now Indulgence or Gratification of this Affection, whether in that Conſciouſneſs, or this Accompliſhment, has the ſame Reſpect to Intereſt, as Indulgence of any other Affection; they equally proceed from or do not proceed from Self-love, they equally include or equally exclude this Principle. Thus it appears, that *Benevolence and the Purſuit of publick Good hath at leaſt as great Reſpect to Self-love and the Purſuit of private Good, as any other particular Paſſions, and their reſpective Purſuits.*

NEITHER is Covetouſneſs, whether as a Temper or Purſuit, any Exception to this. For if by Covetouſneſs is meant the Deſire and Purſuit of Riches for their own Sake, without any Regard to, or Conſideration of the Uſes of them; this hath as little to do with

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with Self-love, as Benevolence hath. But by this Word is uſually meant, not ſuch Madneſs and total Diſtraction of Mind, but immoderate Affection to and Purſuit of Riches as Poſſeſſions in order to ſome further End: namely, Satisfaction, Intereſt, or Good. This therefore is not a particular Affection, or particular Purſuit, but it is the general Principle of Self-love, and the general Purſuit of our own Intereſt; for which Reaſon, the Word, Selfiſh, is by every one appropriated to this Temper and Purſuit. Now as it is ridiculous to aſſert, that Self-love and the Love of our Neighbour are the ſame; ſo neither is it aſſerted, that following theſe different Affections hath the ſame Tendency and Reſpect to our own Intereſt. The Compariſon is not between Self-love and the Love of our Neighbour; between Purſuit of our own Intereſt, and the Intereſt of others: But between the ſeveral particular Affections in Humane Nature towards external Objects, as one Part of the Compariſon; and the one particular Affection to the Good of our Neighbour, as the other Part of it: And it has been ſhewn, that all theſe have the ſame Reſpect to Self-love and private Intereſt.

THERE

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THERE is indeed frequently an Inconſiſtence or Interfering, between Self-love or private Intereſt, and the ſeveral particular Appetites, Paſſions, Affections, or the Purſuits they lead to. But this Competition or Interfering is meerly accidental; and happens much oftener between Pride, Revenge, ſenſual Gratifications, and private Intereſt, than between private Intereſt and Benevolence. For nothing is more common, than to ſee Men give themſelves up to a Paſſion or an Affection to their known Prejudice and Ruin, and in direct contradiction to manifeſt and real Intereſt, and the loudeſt Calls of Self-love: Whereas the ſeeming Competitions and Interfering, between Benevolence and private Intereſt, relate much more to the Materials or Means of Enjoyment, than to Enjoyment itſelf. There is often an interfering in the former, when there is none in the latter. Thus as to Riches: So much Money as a Man gives away, ſo much leſs will remain in his Poſſeſſion. Here is a real interfering. But though a Man cannot poſſibly give without leſſening his Fortune, yet there are Multitudes might give without leſſening their own Enjoyment; becauſe they may have more than they can turn to any

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real Uſe or Advantage to themſelves. Thus the more Thought and Time any one employs about the Intereſts and Good of others, he muſt neceſſarily have leſs to attend his own; but he may have ſo ready and large a Supply of his own Wants, that ſuch Thought might be really uſeleſs to himſelf, though of great Service and Aſſiſtance to Others.

THE general Miſtake, that there is ſome greater Inconſiſtence between endeavouring to promote the Good of Another and Self-intereſt, than between Self-intereſt and purſuing any thing elſe ſeems, as hath already been hinted, to ariſe from our Notions of Property; and to be carried on by this Property's being ſuppoſed to be itſelf our Happineſs or Good. People are ſo very much taken up with this one Subject, that they ſeem from it to have formed a general way of thinking, which they apply to other things that they have nothing to do with. Hence, in a confuſed and ſlight way, it might well be taken for granted, that Another's having no Intereſt in an Affection (*i. e.* his Good not being the Object of it) renders, as one may ſpeak, the Proprietor's Intereſt

Intereſt in it greater; and that if Another had an Intereſt in it, this would render his leſs, or occaſion that ſuch Affection could not be ſo friendly to Self-love, or conducive to private Good, as an Affection or Purſuit which has not a Regard to the Good of Another. This I ſay might be taken for granted, whilſt it was not attended to, that the Object of every particular Affection is equally ſomewhat external to Ourſelves; and whether it be the Good of another Perſon, or whether it be any other external thing, makes no Alteration with Regard to its being one's own Affection, and the Gratification of it one's own private Enjoyment. And ſo far as 'tis taken for granted, that barely having the Means and Materials of Enjoyment is what conſtitutes Intereſt and Happineſs; that our Intereſt or Good conſiſts in Poſſeſſions themſelves, in having the Property of Riches, Houſes, Lands, Gardens, not in the Enjoyment of them; ſo far 'twill even more ſtrongly be taken for granted, in the Way already explained, that an Affections conducing to the Good of another, muſt even neceſſarily occaſion it to conduce leſs to private Good, if not to be poſitively

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detrimental to it. For, if Property and Happineſs are one and the ſame thing, as by increaſing the Property of another, you leſſen your own Property, ſo by promoting the Happineſs of another you muſt leſſen your own Happineſs. But whatever occaſioned the Miſtake, I hope it has been fully proved to be one; as it has been proved, that there is no peculiar Rivalſhip or Competition between Self-love and Benevolence; that as there may be a Competition between theſe two, ſo there may alſo between any particular Affection whatever and Self-love; that every particular Affection, Benevolence among the reſt, is ſubſervient to Self-love by being the Inſtrument of private Enjoyment; and that in one Reſpect Benevolence contributes more to private Intereſt, *i. e.* Enjoyment or Satisfaction, than any other of the particular common Affections, as it is in a Degree its own Gratification.

AND to all theſe Things may be added, That Religion, from whence ariſes our ſtrongeſt Obligation to Benevolence, is ſo far from diſowning the Principle of Self-love, that it often addreſſes itſelf to that very Principle, and always to the Mind in that State when Reaſon preſides; and there can

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no Acceſs be had to the Underſtanding, but by convincing Men, that the Courſe of Life we would perſuade them to is not contrary to their Intereſt. It may be allowed, without any Prejudice to the Cauſe of Virtue and Religion, that our Ideas of Happineſs and Miſery are of all our Ideas the neareſt and moſt important to us; that they will, nay, if you pleaſe, that they ought to prevail over thoſe of Order, and Beauty, and Harmony, and Proportion, if there ſhould ever be, as it is impoſſible there ever ſhould be, any Inconſiſtence between them: Though theſe laſt too, as expreſſing the Fitneſs of Actions, are real as Truth itſelf. Let it be allowed, though Virtue or moral Rectitude does indeed conſiſt in Affection to and Purſuit of what is Right and Good, as ſuch; yet, that when we ſit down in a cool Hour, we can neither juſtify to ourſelves this or any other Purſuit, till we are convinced that it will be for our Happineſs, or at leaſt not contrary to it. SERM. XI.

COMMON Reaſon and Humanity will have ſome Influence upon Mankind, whatever becomes of Speculations: But, ſo far as the Intereſts of Virtue depend upon the Theory of it being ſecured from open Scorn,

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ſo far its very Being in the World depends upon its appearing to have no Contrariety to private Intereſt and Self-love. The foregoing Obſervations therefore, it is hoped, may have gained a little Ground in Favour of the Precept before us; the particular Explanation of which, ſhall be the Subject of the next Diſcourſe.

I WILL conclude at preſent, with obſerving the peculiar Obligation which we are under to Virtue and Religion, as enforced in the Verſes following the Text, in the Epiſtle for the Day, from our Saviour's coming into the World. *The Night is far ſpent, the Day is at hand; let us therefore caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of Light*, &c. The Meaning and Force of which Exhortation is, that Chriſtianity lays us under new Obligations to a good Life, as by it the Will of God is more clearly revealed, and as it affords additional Motives to the Practice of it, over and above thoſe which ariſe out of the Nature of Virtue and Vice; I might add, as our Saviour has ſet us a perfect Example of Goodneſs in our own Nature. Now Love and Charity is plainly the Thing in which he hath placed his Religion; in which therefore,

fore, as we have any Pretence to the Name of Chriſtians, we muſt place ours. He hath at once injoined it upon us by Way of Command with peculiar Force; and by his Example, as having undertaken the Work of our Salvation out of pure Love and Good-will to Mankind. The Endeavour to ſet home this Example upon our Minds is a very proper Employment of this Seaſon, which is bringing on the Feſtival of his Birth: Which as it may teach us many excellent Leſſons of Humility, Reſignation, and Obedience to the Will of God; ſo there is none it recommends with greater Authority, Force and Advantage, than this of Love and Charity; ſince it was *for us Men, and for our Salvation,* that *he came down from Heaven, and was incarnate, and was made Man*; that he might teach us our Duty, and more eſpecially that he might enforce the Practice of it, reform Mankind, and finally bring us to that *eternal Salvation,* of which *he is the Author to all thoſe that obey him.*

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Upon the Love of our Neighbour.

ROM. xiii. 9.

And if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.

HAVING already removed the Prejudices againſt publick Spirit, or the Love of our Neighbour, on the Side of private Intereſt and Self-love; I proceed to the particular Explanation of the Precept before us, by ſhewing, *Who is our Neighbour: In what Senſe we are required to love him as ourſelves: The Influence ſuch Love would have upon our Behaviour in Life*: And laſtly, *How this Commandment comprehends in it all others.*

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I. THE Objects and due Extent of this Affection will be underſtood by attending to the Nature of it, and to the Nature and Circumſtances of Mankind in this World. The Love of our Neighbour is the ſame with Charity, Benevolence, or Good-will: It is an Affection to the Good and Happineſs of our Fellow-creatures. This implies in it a Diſpoſition to produce Happineſs: And this is the ſimple Notion of Goodneſs, which appears ſo amiable wherever we meet with it. From hence it is eaſy to ſee, that the Perfection of Goodneſs conſiſts in Love to the whole Univerſe. This is the Perfection of Almighty God.

BUT as Man is ſo much limited in his Capacity, as ſo ſmall a Part of the Creation comes under his Notice and Influence, and as we are not uſed to conſider things in ſo general a Way; it is not to be thought of, that the Univerſe ſhould be the Object of Benevolence to ſuch Creatures as we are. Thus in that Precept of our Saviour, * *Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*, the Perfection of the Divine Goodneſs is propoſed to our Imitation as it is promiſcuous, and extends to the Evil as

* Matth. v. 48.

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as well as the Good; not as it is abſolutely univerſal, Imitation of it in this Reſpect being plainly beyond us. The Object is too vaſt. For this Reaſon moral Writers alſo have ſubſtituted a leſs general Object for our Benevolence, Mankind. But this likewiſe is an Object too general, and very much out of our View. Therefore Perſons more practical have, inſtead of Mankind, put our Country; and made the Principle of Virtue, of Humane Virtue, to conſiſt in the intire uniform Love of our Country: And this is what we call a publick Spirit; which in Men of publick Stations is the Character of a Patriot. But this is ſpeaking to the upper Part of the World. Kingdoms and Governments are large; and the Sphere of Action of far the greateſt Part of Mankind is much narrower than the Government they live under: Or however, common Men do not conſider their Actions as affecting the whole Community of which they are Members. There plainly is wanting a leſs general and nearer Object of Benevolence for the Bulk of Men, than that of their Country. Therefore the Scripture, not being a Book of Theory and Speculation, but a plain Rule of Life for Mankind,

has

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has with the utmoſt poſſible Propriety put the Principle of Virtue upon the Love of our Neighbour; which is that Part of the Univerſe, that Part of Mankind, that Part of our Country, which comes under our immediate Notice, Acquaintance and Influence, and with which we have to do.

THIS is plainly the true Account or Reaſon, why our Saviour places the Principle of Virtue in the Love of our *Neighbour*; and the Account itſelf ſhows who are comprehended under that Relation.

II. LET us now conſider in what Senſe we are commanded to love our Neighbour *as ourſelves.*

THIS Precept, in its firſt Delivery by our Saviour, is thus introduced: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength; and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* Theſe very different Manners of Expreſſion do not lead our Thoughts to the ſame Meaſure or Degree of Love, common to both Objects; but to one, peculiar to each. Suppoſing then, which is to be ſuppoſed, a diſtinct Meaning and Propriety in the Words, *as thy ſelf*; the Precept we are conſidering will admit of any of theſe Senſes: That we bear the *ſame*

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Kind of Affection to our Neighbour, as we do to ourſelves: Or, that the Love we bear to our Neighbour ſhould have *ſome certain Proportion or other* to Self-love: Or, laſtly, that it ſhould bear the particular Proportion of *Equality*, that *it be in the ſame Degree.* SERM. XII.

Firſt, The Precept may be underſtood as requiring only, that we have the *ſame Kind* of Affection to our Fellow-creatures, as to ourſelves: That, as every Man has the Principle of Self-love, which diſpoſes him to avoid Miſery, and conſult his own Happineſs; ſo we ſhould cultivate the Affection of Good-will to our Neighbour, and that it ſhould influence us to have the ſame Kind of Regard to him. This at leaſt muſt be commanded: And this will not only prevent our being injurious to him, but will alſo put us upon promoting his Good. There are Bleſſings in Life, which we ſhare in common with others; Peace, Plenty, Freedom, healthful Seaſons. But real Benevolence to our Fellow-creatures would give us the Notion of a common Intereſt in a ſtricter Senſe: For in the Degree we love one another, his Intereſt, his Joys and Sorrows, are our own. It is from Self-love that we form the Notion of private Good, and conſider it as our own:

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own: Love of our Neighbour would teach us thus to appropriate to ourſelves his Good and Well-fare; to conſider ourſelves as having a real Share in his Happineſs. Thus the Principle of Benevolence would be an Advocate within our own Breaſts, to take care of the Intereſts of our Fellow-Creatures in all the interfering and Competitions which cannot but be, from the Imperfection of our Nature, and the State we are in. It would likewiſe, in ſome Meaſure, leſſen that interfering; and hinder Men from forming ſo ſtrong a Notion of private Good, excluſive of the Good of others, as we commonly do. Thus, as the private Affection makes us in a peculiar Manner ſenſible of Humanity, Juſtice, or Injuſtice, when exerciſed towards ourſelves; Love of our Neighbour would give us the ſame Kind of Senſibility in his Behalf. This would be the greateſt Security of our uniform Obedience to that moſt equitable Rule; *Whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo unto them.*

ALL this is indeed no more than that we ſhould have a real Love to our Neighbour: But then, which is to be obſerved, the Words, *as thy ſelf*, expreſs this in the moſt diſtinct

distinct Manner, and determine the Precept to relate to the Affection itself. The Advantage, which this Principle of Benevolence has over other remote Considerations, is that it is itself the Temper of Virtue; and likewise, that it is the chief, nay the only effectual Security of our performing the several Offices of Kindness, we owe to our Fellow-creatures. When from distant Considerations Men resolve upon any thing to which they have no liking, or perhaps an Averseness, they are perpetually finding out Evasions and Excuses; which need never be wanting, if People look for them: And they equivocate with themselves in the plainest Cases in the World. This may be in respect to single determinate Acts of Virtue: But it comes in much more, where the Obligation is to a general Course of Behaviour; and most of all, if it be such as cannot be reduced to fixed determinate Rules. This Observation may account for the Diversity of the Expression, in that known Passage of the Prophet *Micah*: *To do justly, and to love Mercy*. A Man's Heart must be formed to Humanity and Benevolence, he must *love Mercy*, otherwise he will not act mercifully in any settled Course of Behaviour.

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As Conſideration of the future Sanctions of Religion is our only Security of perſevering in our Duty, in Caſes of great Temptations: So to get our Heart and Temper formed to a Love and Liking of what is Good, is abſolutely neceſſary in order to our behaving rightly in the familiar and daily Intercourſes amongſt Mankind.

Secondly, The Precept before us may be underſtood to require, that we love our Neighbour in ſome certain *Proportion* or other, *according as* we love ourſelves. And indeed a Man's Character cannot be determined by the Love he bears to his Neighbour, conſidered abſolutely: But the Proportion which this bears to Self-love, whether it be attended to or not, is the chief thing which forms the Character, and influences the Actions. For, as the Form of the Body is a Compoſition of various Parts; ſo likewiſe our inward Structure is not ſimple or uniform, but a Compoſition of various Paſſions, Appetites, Affections, together with Rationality; including in this laſt both the Diſcernment of what is right, and a Diſpoſition to regulate ourſelves by it. There is greater Variety of Parts in what we call a Character, than there are Features in a Face: And

And the Morality of That is no more determined by one Part, than the Beauty or Deformity of This is by one ſingle Feature: Each is to be judged of by all the Parts or Features, not taken ſingly, but together. In the inward Frame the various Paſſions, Appetites, Affections, ſtand in different Reſpects to each other. The Principles in our Mind may be contradictory, or Checks and Allays only, or Incentives and Aſſiſtants to each other. And Principles, which in their Nature have no Kind of Contrariety or Affinity, may yet accidentally be each other's Allays or Incentives.

FROM hence it comes to paſs, that though we were able to look into the inward Contexture of the Heart, and ſee with the greateſt Exactneſs in what Degree any one Principle is in a particular Man; we could not from thence determine, how far that Principle would go towards forming the Character, or what Influence it would have upon the Actions, unleſs we could likewiſe diſcern what other Principles prevailed in him, and ſee the Proportion which that one bears to the others. Thus, though two Men ſhould have the Affection of Compaſſion in the ſame Degree exactly; yet one may have the

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Principle of Reſentment, or of Ambition ſo ſtrong in him, as to prevail over that of Compaſſion, and prevent its having any Influence upon his Actions; ſo that he may deſerve the Character of an hard or cruel Man: Whereas the other, having Compaſſion in juſt the ſame Degree only, yet having Reſentment or Ambition in a lower Degree, his Compaſſion may prevail over them, ſo as to Influence his Actions, and to denominate his Temper compaſſionate. So that, how ſtrange ſoever it may appear to People who do not attend to the thing, yet it is quite manifeſt, that, when we ſay one Man is more Reſenting or Compaſſionate than another, this does not neceſſarily imply that one has the Principle of Reſentment or of Compaſſion ſtronger than the other. For if the Proportion, which Reſentment or Compaſſion bears to other inward Principles, is greater in one than in the other; this is itſelf ſufficient to denominate one more Reſenting or Compaſſionate than the other.

FURTHER, the whole Syſtem as I may ſpeak, of Affections, (including Rationality) which conſtitute the Heart, as this Word is uſed in Scripture and on moral Subjects, are each and all of them ſtronger in ſome

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than in others. Now the Proportion which the two general Affections, Benevolence and Self-love, bear to each other, according to this Interpretation of the Text, denominates Men's Character as to Virtue. Suppoſe then one Man to have the Principle of Benevolence in an higher Degree than another: It will not follow from hence, that his general Temper or Character or Actions will be more Benevolent than the other's. For he may have Self-love in ſuch a Degree as quite to prevail over Benevolence; ſo that it may have no Influence at all upon his Actions; Whereas Benevolence in the other Perſon, though in a lower Degree, may yet be the ſtrongeſt Principle in his Heart; and ſtrong enough to be the Guide of his Actions, ſo as to denominate him a good and virtuous Man. The Caſe is here as in Scales: It is not one Weight, conſidered in itſelf, which determines whether the Scale ſhall aſcend or deſcend; but this depends upon the Proportion, which that one Weight hath to the other.

IT being thus manifeſt that the Influence which Benevolence has upon our Actions, and how far it goes towards forming our Character, is not determined by the Degree

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itſelf of this Principle in our Mind; but by the Proportion it has to Self-love and other Principles: A Compariſon alſo being made in the Text between Self-love and the Love of our Neighbour; theſe joint Conſiderations afforded ſufficient occaſion for treating here of that Proportion: It plainly is implied in the Precept, though it ſhould be queſtioned whether it be the exact Meaning of the Words, *as thy Self.*

LOVE of our Neighbour then muſt bear ſome Proportion to Self-love, and Virtue to be ſure conſiſts in the due Proportion. What this due Proportion is, whether as a Principle in the Mind, or as exerted in Actions, can be judged of only from our Nature and Condition in this World. Of the Degree in which Affections and the Principles of Action, conſidered in themſelves, prevail, we have no Meaſure: Let us then proceed to the Courſe of Behaviour, the Actions they produce.

BOTH our Nature and Condition require, that each particular Man ſhould make particular Proviſion for himſelf: And the Inquiry, what Proportion Benevolence ſhould have to Self-love, when brought down to Practice, will be, what is a competent Care and

and Proviſion for ourſelves. And how certain ſoever it be, that each Man muſt determine this for himſelf; and how ridiculous ſoever it would be, for any to attempt to determine it for Another: yet it is to be obſerved, that the Proportion is real; and that a competent Proviſion has a Bound; and that it cannot be all which we can poſſibly get and keep within our Graſp, without legal Injuſtice. Mankind almoſt univerſally bring in, Vanity, Supplies for what is called a Life of Pleaſure, Covetouſneſs, or imaginary Notions of Superiority over Others, to determine this Queſtion: But every one, who deſires to act a proper Part in Society, would do well to conſider, how far any of them come in to determine it, in the Way of Moral Conſideration. All that can be ſaid is, ſuppoſing, what, as the World goes, is ſo much to be ſuppoſed that 'tis ſcarce to be mentioned, that Perſons do not neglect what they really owe to Themſelves; the more of their Care and Thought, and of their Fortune they employ in doing Good to their Fellow-creatures, the nearer they come up to the Law of Perfection *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* SERM. XII.

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Thirdly, If the Words, *as thy ſelf*, were to be underſtood of an Equality of Affection; it would not be attended with thoſe Conſequences, which perhaps may be thought to follow from it. Suppoſe a Perſon to have the ſame ſettled Regard to Others, as to Himſelf; that in every deliberate Scheme or Purſuit He took their Intereſt into the Account in the ſame Degree as his own, ſo far as an Equality of Affection would produce this: Yet He would in fact, and ought to be, much more taken up and employed about Himſelf, and his own Concerns; than about Others, and their Intereſts. For, beſides the one common Affection toward Himſelf and his Neighbour, He would have ſeveral other particular Affections, Paſſions, Appetites, which he could not poſſibly feel in common both for Himſelf and Others: Now theſe Senſations themſelves very much employ us; and have perhaps as great Influence, as Self-love. So far indeed as Self-love, and cool Reflection upon what is for our Intereſt, would ſet us on work to gain a Supply of our own ſeveral Wants; ſo far the Love of our Neighbour would make us do the ſame for him: But the Degree in which we are put upon ſeeking and making uſe of the Means

of

of Gratification, by the feeling of thoſe Affections, Appetites and Paſſions, muſt neceſſarily be peculiar to ourſelves. SERM. XII.

THAT there are particular Paſſions, (ſuppoſe Shame, Reſentment) which Men ſeem to have, and feel in common both for Themſelves and Others, makes no Alteration in Reſpect to thoſe Paſſions and Appetites which cannot poſſibly be thus felt in common. From hence, (and perhaps more things of the like Kind might be mentioned,) it follows, that though there were an Equality of Affection to both, yet Regards to Ourſelves would be more prevalent than Attention to the Concerns of Others.

AND from moral Conſiderations it ought to be ſo, ſuppoſing ſtill the Equality of Affection commanded: Becauſe we are in a peculiar manner, as I may ſpeak, entruſted with ourſelves; and therefore Care of our own Intereſts, as well as of our Conduct, particularly belongs to us.

TO theſe things muſt be added, that moral Obligations can extend no further than to natural Poſſibilities. Now we have a Perception of our own Intereſts, like Conſciouſneſs of our own Exiſtence, which we always carry about with us; and which, in its Continu-

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ation, Kind, and Degree, ſeems impoſſible to be felt in reſpect to the Intereſts of Others.

FROM all theſe Things it fully appears, that though we were to love our Neighbour in the ſame Degree as we love ourſelves, ſo far as this is poſſible; yet the Care of ourſelves, of the Individual, would not be neglected; the apprehended Danger of which ſeems to be the only Objection againſt underſtanding the Precept in this ſtrict Senſe.

III. THE general Temper of Mind which the due Love of our Neighbour would form us to, and the Influence it would have upon our Behaviour in Life, is now to be conſidered.

THE Temper and Behaviour of Charity is explained at large, in that known Paſſage of St. *Paul* * : *Charity ſuffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not, doth not behave itſelf unſeemly, ſeeketh not her own, thinketh no evil, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.* As to the Meaning of the Expreſſions, *ſeeketh not her own, thinketh no evil, believeth all things*; however thoſe Expreſſions may be explained away,

* 1 Cor. xiii.

way, this Meekneſs, and, in ſome Degree, Eaſineſs of Temper, Readineſs to forego our Right for the ſake of Peace as well as in the Way of Compaſſion, Freedom from Miſtruſt, and Diſpoſition to believe well of our Neighbour, this general Temper, I ſay, accompanies and is plainly the Effect of Love and Good-will. And, though ſuch is the World in which we live, that Experience and Knowledge of it, not only may, but muſt beget in us greater Regard to ourſelves, and Doubtfulneſs of the Characters of Others, than is natural to Mankind; yet theſe ought not to be carried further than the Nature and Courſe of things make neceſſary. It is ſtill true, even in the preſent State of things, bad as it is, that a real good Man had rather be deceived, than be ſuſpicious; had rather forego his known Right, than run the Venture of doing even a hard thing. This is the general Temper of that Charity, of which the Apoſtle aſſerts, that if he had it not, giving his *Body to be burned would avail him nothing*; and which, he ſays, *ſhall never fail.* SERM. XII.

THE happy Influence of this Temper extends to every different Relation and Circumſtance in Humane Life. It plainly renders

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ders a Man better, more to be desired, as to all the Respects and Relations we can stand in to each other. The benevolent Man is disposed to make use of all external Advantages in such a Manner, as shall contribute to the Good of Others, as well as to his own Satisfaction. His own Satisfaction consists in this. He will be easy and kind to his Dependants, compassionate to the Poor and Distressed, friendly to all with whom he has to do. This includes the good Neighbour, Parent, Master, Magistrate: And such a Behaviour would plainly make Dependance, Inferiority, and even Servitude, easy. So that a good or charitable Man of superiour Rank in Wisdom, Fortune, Authority, is a common Blessing to the Place he lives in; Happiness grows under his Influence. This good Principle in Inferiours would discover itself in paying Respect, Gratitude, Obedience, as due. It were therefore methinks one just way of trying one's own Character, to ask ourselves, Am I in reality a better Master or Servant, a better Friend, a better Neighbour, than such and such Persons; whom, perhaps, I may think not to deserve the Character of Virtue and Religion so much as my self?

AND

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AND as to the Spirit of Party, which unhappily prevails amongſt Mankind, whatever are the Diſtinctions which ſerve for a Supply to it, ſome or other of which have obtained in all Ages and Countries: One, who is thus friendly to his Kind, will immediately make due Allowances for it, as what cannot but be amongſt ſuch Creatures as Men, in ſuch a World as this. And as Wrath and Fury and Overbearing upon theſe Occaſions proceed, as I may ſpeak, from Men's feeling only on their own Side: So a common Feeling, for others as well as for ourſelves, would render us ſenſible to this Truth, which it is ſtrange can have ſo little Influence; that we ourſelves differ from others, juſt as much as they do from us. I put the Matter in this Way, becauſe it can ſcarce be expected that the Generality of Men ſhould ſee, that thoſe things, which are made the Occaſions of Diſſenſion and fomenting the Party-Spirit, are really nothing at all: But it may be expected from all People, how much ſoever they are in earneſt about their reſpective Peculiarities, that Humanity, and common Good-will to their Fellow-creatures, ſhould moderate and reſtrain that wretched Spirit.

THIS

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THIS good Temper of Charity likewiſe would prevent Strife and Enmity ariſing from other Occaſions: It would prevent our giving juſt Cauſe of Offence, and our taking it without Cauſe. And in Caſes of real Injury, a good Man will make all the Allowances which are to be made; and, without any Attempts of Retaliation, he will only conſult his own and other Men's Security for the future, againſt Injuſtice and Wrong.

IV. I PROCEED to conſider laſtly, what is affirmed of the Precept now explained, That it comprehends in it all others; *i. e.* that to love our Neighbour as ourſelves includes in it all Virtues.

NOW the Way in which every Maxim of Conduct, or general Speculative Aſſertion, when it is to be explained at large, ſhould be treated, is, to ſhow what are the particular Truths which were deſigned to be comprehended under ſuch a general Obſervation, how far it is ſtrictly true; and then the Limitations, Reſtrictions, and Exceptions, if there be Exceptions, with which it is to be underſtood. But it is only the former of theſe, namely, how far the Aſſertion in the Text holds, and the Ground of the Pre-eminence aſſigned to the Precept of it, which

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in ſtrictneſs comes into our preſent Conſi- SERM. XII.
deration.

HOWEVER, in almoſt every thing that is ſaid, there is ſomewhat to be underſtood beyond what is explicitly laid down, and which we of Courſe ſupply; ſomewhat, I mean, which would not be commonly called a Reſtriction or Limitation. Thus, when Benevolence is ſaid to be the Sum of Virtue, it is not ſpoken of as a blind Propenſion, but as a Principle in reaſonable Creatures, and ſo to be directed by their Reaſon: For Reaſon and Reflection comes into our Notion of a moral Agent. And That will lead us to conſider diſtant Conſequences, as well as the immediate Tendency of an Action: It will teach us, that the Care of ſome Perſons, ſuppoſe Children and Families, is particularly committed to our Charge by Nature and Providence; as alſo that there are other Circumſtances, ſuppoſe Friendſhip or former Obligations, which require that we do good to ſome, preferably to others. Reaſon, conſidered meerly as ſubſervient to Benevolence, as aſſiſting to produce the greateſt Good, will teach us to have particular Regard to theſe Relations and Circumſtances; becauſe it is plainly for the Good of the World

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World that they ſhould be regarded. And as there are numberleſs Caſes, in which, notwithſtanding Appearances, we are not competent Judges, whether a particular Action will upon the Whole do Good or Harm; Reaſon in the ſame Way will teach us to be cautious how we act in theſe Caſes of Uncertainty. It will ſuggeſt to our Conſideration, which is the ſafer Side; how liable we are to be led wrong by Paſſion and private Intereſt; and what Regard is due to Laws, and the Judgment of Mankind. All theſe things muſt come into Conſideration, were it only in order to determine which way of acting is likely to produce the greateſt Good. Thus, upon Suppoſition that it were in the ſtricteſt Senſe true, without Limitation, that Benevolence includes in it all Virtues; yet Reaſon muſt come in as its Guide and Director, in order to attain its own End, the End of Benevolence, the greateſt publick Good. Reaſon then being thus included, let us now conſider the Truth of the Aſſertion itſelf.

Firſt, It is manifeſt that nothing can be of Conſequence to Mankind or any Creature, but Happineſs. This then is all which any Perſon can, in ſtrictneſs of ſpeaking,

be ſaid to have a Right to. We can therefore *owe no Man any thing*, but only to further and promote his Happineſs, according to our Abilities. And therefore a Diſpoſition and Endeavour to do Good to all with whom we have to do, in the Degree and Manner which the different Relations we ſtand in to them require, is a Diſcharge of all the Obligations we are under to them.

As Humane Nature is not one ſimple uniform Thing, but a Compoſition of various Parts; Body, Spirit, Appetites, particular Paſſions and Affections; for each of which reaſonable Self-love would lead Men to have due Regard, and make ſuitable Proviſion: So Society conſiſts of various Parts, to which we ſtand in different Reſpects and Relations; and juſt Benevolence would as ſurely lead us to have due Regard to each of theſe, and behave as the reſpective Relations require. Reaſonable Good-will, and right Behaviour towards our Fellow-creatures, are in a Manner the ſame: Only that the former expreſſeth the Principle as it is in the Mind; the latter, the Principle as it were become external, *i. e.* exerted in Actions.

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AND ſo far as Temperance, Sobriety, and Moderation in ſenſual Pleaſures, and the contrary Vices, have any Reſpect to our Fellow-creatures, any Influence upon their Quiet, Welfare, and Happineſs; as they always have a real, and often a near Influence upon it; ſo far it is manifeſt thoſe Virtues may be produced by the Love of our Neighbour, and that the contrary Vices would be prevented by it. Indeed, if Men's Regard to themſelves will not reſtrain them from Exceſs; it may be thought little probable, that their Love to others will be ſufficient: But the Reaſon is, that their Love to others is not, any more than their Regard to themſelves, juſt, and in its due Degree. There are however manifeſt Inſtances of Perſons kept ſober and temperate from Regard to their Affairs, and the Welfare of thoſe who depend upon them. And it is obvious to every one, that habitual Exceſs, a diſſolute Courſe of Life, implies a general neglect of the Duties we owe towards our Friends, our Families and our Country.

FROM hence it is manifeſt that the common Virtues, and the common Vices of Mankind, may be traced up to Benevolence,

or the want of it. And this intitles the Precept, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, to the Pre-eminence given to it; and is a Juſtification of the Apoſtle's Aſſertion, that all other Commandments are comprehended in it; whatever Cautions and Reſtrictions * there are, which might require

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* For Inſtance: As we are not competent Judges, what is upon the whole for the Good of the World; there may be other immediate Ends appointed us to purſue, beſides that one of doing Good, or producing Happineſs. Though the Good of the Creation be the only End of the Author of it, yet he may have laid us under particular Obligations, which we may diſcern and feel ourſelves under, quite diſtinct from a Perception, that the Obſervance or Violation of them is for the Happineſs or Miſery of our Fellow-creatures. And this is in Fact the Caſe. For there are certain Diſpoſitions of Mind, and certain Actions, which are in themſelves approved or diſapproved by Mankind, abſtracted from the Conſideration of their Tendency to the Happineſs or Miſery of the World; approved or diſapproved by Reflection, by that Principle within, which is the Guide of Life, the Judge of Right and Wrong. Numberleſs Inſtances of this Kind might be mentioned. There are Pieces of Treachery, which in themſelves appear baſe and deteſtable to every one. There are Actions, which perhaps can ſcarce have any other general Name given them than Indecencies, which yet are odious and ſhocking to Humane Nature. There is ſuch a thing as Meanneſs, a little Mind; which, as it is quite diſtinct from Incapacity, ſo it raiſes a Diſlike and Diſapprobation quite different from that Contempt, which Men are too apt to have, of meer Folly. On the other Hand; what we call Greatneſs of Mind, is the Object of another Sort of Approbation, than ſuperiour Underſtanding. Fidelity, Honour, ſtrict Juſtice, are themſelves approved in the higheſt Degree, abſtracted from Conſideration

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require to be conſidered, if we were to ſtate particularly and at length, what is Virtue and right Behaviour in Mankind. But,

Secondly, IT might be added, that in a higher and more general Way of Conſideration, leaving out the particular Nature of Creatures, and the particular Circumſtances in which they are placed, Benevolence ſeems in the ſtricteſt Senſe to include in it all that is Good and Worthy; all that is Good, which we have any diſtinct particular Notion of. We have no clear Conception of any poſitive moral Attribute in the ſupream Being, but what may be reſolved up into Goodneſs. And, if we conſider a reaſonable Creature or moral Agent, without Regard to the particular Relations and Circumſtances in which he is placed; we cannot conceive any thing elſe to come in towards determining

of their Tendency. Now, whether it be thought that each of theſe are connected with Benevolence in Our Nature, and ſo may be conſidered as the ſame thing with it; or whether ſome of them be thought an inferiour Kind of Virtues and Vices, ſomewhat like natural Beauties and Deformities; or laſtly, plain Exceptions to the general Rule; thus much however is certain, that the things now inſtanced in, and numberleſs others, are approved or diſapproved by Mankind in general, in quite another View than as conducive to the Happineſs or Miſery of the World.

determining whether he is to be ranked in an higher or lower Claſs of virtuous Beings, but the higher or lower Degree in which that Principle, and what is manifeſtly connected with it, prevail in him. SERM. XII.

THAT which we more ſtrictly call Piety, or the Love of God, and which is an eſſential Part of a right Temper, ſome may perhaps imagine no Way connected with Benevolence: Yet ſurely they muſt be connected, if there be indeed in Being an Object infinitely Good. Humane Nature is ſo conſtituted, that every good Affection implies the Love of itſelf; *i. e.* becomes the Object of a new Affection in the ſame Perſon. Thus, to be righteous implies in it the Love of Righteouſneſs; to be benevolent the Love of Benevolence; to be good the Love of Goodneſs; whether this Righteouſneſs, Benevolence, or Goodneſs, be viewed as in our own Mind, or in another's: And the Love of God as a Being perfectly Good, is the Love of perfect Goodneſs contemplated in a Being or Perſon. Thus Morality and Religion, Virtue and Piety, will at laſt neceſſarily co-incide, run up into one and the ſame Point, and *Love* will be in all Senſes *the End of the Commandment.*

O Almighty God, inſpire us with this divine Principle; kill in us all the Seeds of Envy and Ill-will; and help us, by cultivating within ourſelves the Love of our Neighbour, to improve in the Love of Thee. Thou haſt placed us in various Kindreds, Friendſhips, and Relations, as the School of Diſcipline for our Affections: Help us, by the due Exerciſe of them, to improve to Perfection; till all partial Affection be loſt in that intire univerſal one, and Thou, O God, ſhalt be all in all.

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SERMON XIII, XIV.

Upon the Love of GOD.

MATTH. xxii. 37.

Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.

EVERY Body knows, you therefore need only juſt be put in Mind, that there is ſuch a Thing, as having ſo great Horror of one Extream, as to run inſenſibly and of Courſe into the contrary; and that a Doctrine's having been a Shelter for Enthuſiaſm, or made to ſerve the Purpoſes of Superſtition, is no Proof of the Falſity of it: Truth or Right being ſomewhat real in itſelf, and ſo not to be judged of by its SERM. XIII.

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Liableneſs to Abuſe, or by its ſuppoſed Diſtance from or Nearneſs to Error. It may be ſufficient to have mentioned this in general, without taking Notice of the particular Extravagancies, which have been vented under the Pretence or Endeavour of explaining the Love of God; or how manifeſtly we are got into the contrary Extream, under the Notion of a reaſonable Religion; ſo very reaſonable, as to have nothing to do with the Heart and Affections, if theſe Words ſignify any thing but the Faculty by which we diſcern ſpeculative Truth.

By the Love of God, I would underſtand all thoſe Regards, all thoſe Affections of Mind, which are due immediately to him from ſuch a Creature as Man, and which reſt in him as their End. As this does not include ſervile Fear; ſo neither will any other Regards, how reaſonable ſoever, which reſpect any thing out of or beſides the Perfection of the divine Nature, come into Conſideration here. But all Fear is not excluded, becauſe his Diſpleaſure is itſelf the natural proper Object of Fear. Reverence, Ambition of his Love and Approbation, Delight in the Hope or Conſciouſneſs of it, come likewiſe into this Definition of the

Love

Love of God; becauſe he is the natural Object of all thoſe Affections or Movements of Mind, as really as he is the Object of the Affection, which is in the ſtricteſt Senſe called Love; and all of them equally reſt in him, as their End. And they may all be underſtood to be implied in theſe Words of our Saviour, without putting any Force upon them: For he is ſpeaking of the Love of God and our Neighbour, as containing the whole of Piety and Virtue. SERM. XIII.

IT is plain that the Nature of Man is ſo conſtituted, as to feel certain Affections upon the Sight or Contemplation of certain Objects. Now the very Notion of Affection implies reſting in its Object as an End. And the particular Affection to good Characters, Reverence and moral Love of them, is natural to all thoſe who have any Degree of real Goodneſs in themſelves. This will be illuſtrated by the Deſcription of a perfect Character in a Creature; and by conſidering the Manner, in which a good Man in his Preſence would be affected towards ſuch a Character. He would of Courſe feel the Affections of Love, Reverence, Deſire of his Approbation, Delight in the Hope or Conſciouſneſs of it. And ſurely all this is

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applicable, and may be brought up to that Being, who is infinitely more than an adequate Object of all those Affections; whom we are commanded to *Love with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Mind.* And of these Regards towards Almighty God, some are more particularly suitable to and becoming so imperfect a Creature as Man, in this mortal State we are passing through; and some of them, and perhaps other Exercises of the Mind, will be the Employment and Happiness of Good Men in a State of Perfection.

THIS is a general View of what the following Discourse will contain. And it is manifest the Subject is a real one: There is nothing in it enthusiastical or unreasonable. And if it be indeed at all a Subject, it is one of the utmost Importance.

As Mankind have a Faculty by which they discern speculative Truth, so we have various Affections towards external Objects. Understanding and Temper, Reason and Affection, are as distinct Ideas, as Reason and Hunger; and one would think could no more be confounded. It is by Reason that we get the Ideas of several Objects of our Affections; But in these Cases Reason and

Affection

Affection are no more the ſame, than Sight of a particular Object, and the Pleaſure or Uneaſineſs conſequent thereupon, are the ſame. Now, as Reaſon tends to and reſts in the Diſcernment of Truth, the Object of it; ſo the very Nature of Affection conſiſts in tending towards, and reſting in, its Objects as an End. We do indeed often in common Language ſay, that things are loved, deſired, eſteemed, not for themſelves, but for ſomewhat further, ſomewhat out of and beyond them: Yet, in theſe Caſes, whoever will attend, will ſee, that theſe Things are not in Reality the Objects of the Affections, *i. e.* are not loved, deſired, eſteemed, but the ſomewhat further and beyond them. If we have no Affections which reſt in what are called their Objects, then what is called Affection, Love, Deſire, Hope, in Humane Nature, is only an uneaſineſs in being at Reſt; an unquiet Diſpoſition to Action, Progreſs, Purſuit, without End or Meaning. But if there be any ſuch thing as Delight in the Company of one Perſon, rather than of another; whether in the Way of Friendſhip, or Mirth and Entertainment, it is all one, if it be without reſpect to Fortune, Honour, or increaſing our Stores of

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of Knowledge, or any thing beyond the preſent time; here is an Inſtance of an Affection abſolutely reſting in its Object as its End, and being gratified, in the ſame Way as the Appetite of Hunger is ſatisfied with Food. Yet nothing is more common than to hear it aſked, What Advantage a Man hath in ſuch a Courſe, ſuppoſe of Study, particular Friendſhips, or in any other; nothing, I ſay, is more common than to hear ſuch a Queſtion put in a Way which ſuppoſes no Gain, Advantage or Intereſt, but as a Means to ſomewhat further: And if ſo, then there is no ſuch thing at all as real Intereſt, Gain or Advantage. This is the ſame Abſurdity with reſpect to Life, as an infinite Series of Effects without a Cauſe is in Speculation. The Gain, Advantage or Intereſt conſiſts in the Delight itſelf, ariſing from ſuch a Faculty's having its Object: Neither is there any ſuch thing as Happineſs or Enjoyment, but what ariſes from hence. The Pleaſures of Hope and of Reflection are not Exceptions: The former being only this Happineſs anticipated; the latter, the ſame Happineſs enjoyed over again after its Time. And even the general Expectation of future Happineſs can

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can afford Satisfaction, only as it is a preſent Object to the Principle of Self-love.

IT was doubtleſs intended, that Life ſhould be very much a Purſuit to the Groſs of Mankind. But this is carried ſo much further than is reaſonable, that what gives immediate Satisfaction, *i. e.* our preſent Intereſt, is ſcarce conſidered as our Intereſt at all. It is Inventions which have only a remote Tendency towards Enjoyment, perhaps but a remote Tendency towards gaining the Means only of Enjoyment, which are chiefly ſpoken of as uſeful to the World. And though this way of thinking were juſt with reſpect to the imperfect State we are now in, where we know ſo little of Satisfaction without Satiety; yet it muſt be guarded againſt, when we are conſidering the Happineſs of a State of Perfection; which Happineſs being Enjoyment and not Hope, muſt neceſſarily conſiſt in this, that our Affections have their Objects, and reſt in thoſe Objects as an End, *i. e.* be ſatisfied with them. This will further appear in the Sequel of this Diſcourſe.

OF the ſeveral Affections, or inward Senſations, which particular Objects excite in Man, there are ſome, the having of which implies the Love of them, when they are reflect-

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reflected upon *. This cannot be ſaid of all our Affections, Principles, and Motives of Action. It were ridiculous to aſſert, that a Man upon Reflection hath the ſame Kind of Approbation of the Appetite of Hunger, or the Paſſion of Fear, as he hath of Good-will to his Fellow-creatures. To be a juſt, a good, a righteous Man, plainly carries with it a peculiar Affection to, or Love of Juſtice, Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs, when theſe Principles are the Objects of Contemplation. Now if a Man approves of, or hath an Affection to, any Principle in and for itſelf; incidental things allowed for, it will be the ſame whether he views it in his own Mind or in another; in himſelf, or in his Neighbour. This is the Account of our Approbation of, our moral Love and Affection to good Characters; which cannot but be in thoſe who have any Degrees of real Goodneſs in themſelves, and who diſcern and take Notice of the ſame Principle in others.

* St. *Auſtin obſerves*, Amor ipſe ordinate amandus eſt, quo bene amatur quod amandum eſt, ut ſit in nobis Virtus, quâ vivitur bene, *i. e. The Affection which we rightly have for what is lovely, muſt* ordinate *juſtly, in due Manner, and Proportion, become the Object of a new Affection, or be itſelf beloved, in order to our being endued with that Virtue which is the Principle of a good Life.* Civ. Dei. L. 15. c. 22.

FROM

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FROM Obſervation of what paſſes within ourſelves, our own Actions, and the Behaviour of others, the Mind may carry on its Reflections as far as it pleaſes; much beyond what we experience in ourſelves, or diſcern in our Fellow-creatures. It may go on, and conſider Goodneſs as become an uniform continued Principle of Action, as conducted by Reaſon, and forming a Temper and Character abſolutely good and perfect, which is in a higher Senſe excellent, and proportionably the Object of Love and Approbation.

LET us then ſuppoſe a Creature perfect according to his created Nature: Let his Form be Humane, and his Capacities no more than equal to thoſe of the Chief of Men: Goodneſs ſhall be his proper Character; with Wiſdom to direct it, and Power within ſome certain determined Sphere of Action to exert it: But Goodneſs muſt be the ſimple actuating Principle within him; this being the moral Quality which is amiable, or the immediate Object of Love as diſtinct from other Affections of Approbation. Here then is a finite Object for our Mind to tend towards, to exerciſe itſelf upon: A Creature, perfect according to his Capacity, fixt, ſteady, equally unmoved by weak Pity or more

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weak Fury and Reſentment; forming the juſteſt Scheme of Conduct; going on undiſturbed in the Execution of it, through the ſeveral Methods of Severity and Reward, towards his End, namely, the general Happineſs of all with whom he hath to do, as in itſelf right and valuable. This Character, though uniform in itſelf, in its Principle, yet exerting itſelf in different Ways, or conſidered in different Views, may by its appearing Variety move different Affections. Thus, the Severity of Juſtice would not affect us in the ſame Way, as an Act of Mercy: The adventitious Qualities of Wiſdom and Power may be conſidered in themſelves: And even the Strength of Mind, which this immoveable Goodneſs ſuppoſes, may likewiſe be viewed as an Object of Contemplation, diſtinct from the Goodneſs itſelf. Superiour Excellence of any Kind, as well as ſuperiour Wiſdom and Power, is the Object of Awe and Reverence to all Creatures, whatever their moral Character be: But ſo far as Creatures of the loweſt Rank were good, ſo far the View of this Character, as ſimply good, muſt appear amiable to them, be the Object of, or beget Love. Further, ſuppoſe we were conſcious, that this ſuperiour Perſon ſo far approved

approved of us, that we had nothing ſervilely to fear from him; that he was really our Friend, and kind and good to us in particular, as he had occaſionally Intercourſe with us: We muſt be other Creatures than we are, or we could not but feel the ſame Kind of Satisfaction and Enjoyment (whatever would be the Degree of it) from this higher Acquaintance and Friendſhip, as we feel from common ones; the Intercourſe being real, and the Perſons equally preſent, in both Caſes. We ſhould have a more ardent Deſire to be approved by his better Judgment, and a Satisfaction in that Approbation of the ſame ſort with what would be felt in reſpect to common Perſons, or be wrought in us by their Preſence. SERM. XIII.

LET us now raiſe the Character, and ſuppoſe this Creature, for we are ſtill going on with the Suppoſition of a Creature, our proper Guardian and Governour; that we were in a Progreſs of Being towards ſomewhat further; and that his Scheme of Government was too faſt for our Capacities to comprehend; remembring ſtill that he is perfectly Good, and our Friend as well as our Governour. Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, accidentally viewed any where, would

inſpire

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inſpire Reverence, Awe, Love: And as theſe Affections would be raiſed in higher or lower Degrees, in Proportion as we had occaſionally more or leſs Intercourſe with the Creature endued with thoſe Qualities; ſo this further Conſideration and Knowledge, that he was our proper Guardian and Governor, would much more bring theſe Objects and Qualities home to ourſelves; teach us they had a greater reſpect to us in particular, that we had an higher Intereſt in that Wiſdom and Power and Goodneſs. We ſhould, with Joy, Gratitude, Reverence, Love, Truſt, and Dependance, appropriate the Character, as what we had a right in; and make our Boaſt in ſuch our Relation to it. And the Concluſion of the whole would be, that we ſhould refer ourſelves implicitly to him, and caſt ourſelves entirely upon him. As the whole Attention of Life ſhould be to obey his Commands; ſo the higheſt Enjoyment of it muſt ariſe from the Contemplation of this Character, and our Relation to it, from a Conſciouſneſs of his Favour and Approbation, and from the Exerciſe of thoſe Affections towards Him which could not but be raiſed from his Preſence. A Being who hath theſe Attributes, who ſtands in this Relation,

lation, and is thus ſenſibly preſent to the Mind, muſt neceſſarily be the Object of theſe Affections: There is as real a Correſpondence between them, as between the loweſt Appetite of Senſe and its Object. SERM. XIII.

THAT this Being is not a Creature, but the Almighty God; that he is of infinite Power and Wiſdom and Goodneſs, does not render him leſs the Object of Reverence and Love, than he would be if he had thoſe Attributes only in a limited Degree. The Being who made us, and upon whom we intirely depend, is the Object of ſome Regards. He hath given us certain Affections of Mind, which correſpond to Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs; *i. e.* which are raiſed upon View of thoſe Qualities. If then he be really wiſe, powerful, good; he is the natural Object of thoſe Affections, which he hath endued us with, and which correſpond to thoſe Attributes. That he is infinite in Power, perfect in Wiſdom and Goodneſs, makes no Alteration, but only that he is the Object of thoſe Affections raiſed to the higheſt Pitch. He is not indeed to be diſcerned by any of our Senſes. *I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand where he*

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doth work, but I cannot behold him: He hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him. O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his Seat! * But is He then afar off: Does he not fill Heaven and Earth with his Preſence? The Preſence of our Fellow-creatures affects our Senſes, and our Senſes give us the Knowledge of their Preſence; which hath different Kinds of Influence upon us; Love, Joy, Sorrow, Reſtraint, Encouragement, Reverence. However this Influence is not immediately from our Senſes, but from that Knowledge. Thus ſuppoſe a Perſon neither to ſee nor hear Another, not to know by any of his Senſes, but yet certainly to know, that Another was with him; this Knowledge might, and in many Caſes would, have one or more of the Effects before-mentioned. It is therefore not only reaſonable, but alſo natural, to be affected with a Preſence, though it be not the Object of our Senſes: Whether it be, or be not, is merely an accidental Circumſtance, which needs not come into Conſideration: It is the Certainty that He is with us, and we with him, which hath the Influence. We conſider Perſons then as preſent,

* Job xxii.

preſent, not only when they are within Reach of our Senſes, but alſo when we are aſſured by any other Means that They are within ſuch a Nearneſs; nay, if they are not, we can recall them to our Mind, and be moved towards them at preſent: And muſt He, who is ſo much more intimately with us, that *in Him we live and move and have our Being*, be thought too diſtant to be the Object of our Affections? We own and feel the Force of amiable and worthy Qualities in our Fellow-creatures: And can we be inſenſible to the Contemplation of perfect Goodneſs? Do we reverence the Shadows of Greatneſs here below, are we ſollicitous about Honour and Eſteem and the Opinion of the World: And ſhall we not feel the ſame with reſpect to Him, whoſe are Wiſdom and Power in their Original, who *is the God of Judgment by whom Actions are weighed?* Thus Love, Reverence, Deſire of Eſteem, every Faculty, every Affection, tends towards, and is employed about its reſpective Object in common Caſes: And muſt the Exerciſe of them be ſuſpended with Regard to him alone, who is an Object, an infinitely more than adequate Object, to our moſt exalted Faculties; Him,

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of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things?

As we cannot remove from this Earth, or change our general Buſineſs on it; ſo neither can we alter our real Nature. Therefore no Exerciſe of the Mind can be recommended, but only the Exerciſe of thoſe Faculties you are conſcious of. Religion does not demand new Affections, but only claims the Direction of thoſe you already have, thoſe Affections you daily feel; though unhappily confined to Objects, not altogether unſuitable, but altogether unequal to them. We only repreſent to you the higher, the adequate Objects of thoſe very Faculties and Affections. Let the Man of Ambition go on ſtill to conſider Diſgrace as the greateſt Evil; Honour, as his chief Good. But Diſgrace, in whoſe Eſtimation? Honour, in whoſe Judgment? This is the only Queſtion. If Shame, and Delight in Eſteem be ſpoken of as real, as any ſettled Ground of Pain or Pleaſure; both theſe muſt be in Proportion to the ſuppoſed Wiſdom and Worth of him, by whom we are contemned or eſteemed. Muſt it then be thought enthuſiaſtical, to ſpeak of a Senſibility of this Sort, which ſhall have reſpect to an unerring Judgment, to infinite Wiſ-

dom;

dom; when we are assured This unerring Judgment, This infinite Wisdom does observe upon our Actions? SERM. XIII.

'TIS the same with respect to the Love of God in the strictest and most confined Sense. We only offer and represent the highest Object of an Affection, supposed already in your Mind. Some Degree of Goodness must be previously supposed: This always implies the Love of itself, an Affection to Goodness: The highest, the adequate Object of this Affection, is perfect Goodness; which therefore we are to *love with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength.* "Must we then, forgetting our own Interest, "as it were go out of ourselves, and love God "for his own Sake?" No more forget your own Interest, no more go out of yourselves than when you prefer one Place, one Prospect, the Conversation of one Man to that of Another. Does not every Affection necessarily imply, that the Object of it be itself loved? If it be not, 'tis not the Object of the Affection. You may and ought if you can; but it is a great Mistake to think you can, love or fear or hate any Thing, from Consideration that such Love or Fear or Hatred may be a Means of obtaining Good or avoiding

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ing Evil. But the Queſtion, whether we ought to love God for his Sake or for our own, being a mere Miſtake in Language; the real Queſtion, which this is miſtaken for, will, I ſuppoſe, be anſwered by obſerving, that the Goodneſs of God already exerciſed towards us, our preſent Dependance upon him, and our Expectation of future Benefits, ought, and have a natural Tendency, to beget in us the Affection of Gratitude, and greater Love towards Him, than the ſame Goodneſs exerciſed towards others: were it only for this Reaſon, that every Affection is moved in Proportion to the Senſe we have of the Object of it; and we cannot but have a more lively Senſe of Goodneſs, when exerciſed towards ourſelves, than when exerciſed towards others. I added Expectation of future Benefits, becauſe the Ground of that Expectation is preſent Goodneſs.

THUS Almighty God is the natural Object of the ſeveral Affections, Love, Reverence, Fear, Deſire of Approbation. For though He is ſimply One, yet we cannot but conſider Him in partial and different Views. He is in Himſelf one uniform Being, and for ever the ſame without *Variableneſs or Shadow of Turning*: But his infinite Greatneſs,

His

His Goodneſs, His Wiſdom, are different Objects to our Mind. To which is to be added, that from the Changes in our own Characters, together with his Unchangeableneſs, we cannot but conſider ourſelves as more or leſs the Objects of His Approbation, and really be ſo. For if He approves what is Good; He cannot, meerly from the Unchangeableneſs of his Nature, approve what is Evil. Hence muſt ariſe more various Movements of Mind, more different Kinds of Affections. And this greater Variety alſo is juſt and reaſonable in ſuch Creatures as we are, though it reſpects a Being ſimply one, good and perfect. As ſome of theſe Affections are moſt particularly ſuitable to ſo imperfect a Creature as Man, in this mortal State we are paſſing through; ſo there may be other Exerciſes of Mind, or ſome of theſe in higher Degrees, our Employment and Happineſs in a State of Perfection. SERM. XIII.

CONSIDER then our Ignorance, the Imperfection of our Neture, our Virtue and our Condition in this World, with reſpect to an infinitely good and juſt Being, our Creator and Governour; and you will ſee what religious Affections of Mind are moſt particularly SERM. XIV.

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ticularly suitable to this mortal State we are passing through.

THOUGH we are not affected with any thing so strongly, as what we discern with our Senses; and though our Nature and Condition require, that we be much taken up about sensible things; yet our Reason convinces us that God is present with us, and we see and feel the Effects of his Goodness: He is therefore the Object of some Regards. The Imperfection of our Virtue, joined with the Consideration of his absolute Rectitude or Holiness, will scarce permit that Perfection of Love, which entirely casts out all Fear: Yet Goodness is the Object of Love to all Creatures who have any Degree of it themselves; and Consciousness of a real Endeavour to approve ourselves to Him, joined with the Consideration of his Goodness, as it quite excludes servile Dread and Horror, so it is plainly a reasonable Ground for Hope of his Favour. Neither Fear, nor Hope, nor Love then are excluded: And one or another of these will prevail, according to the different Views we have of God; and ought to prevail, according to the Changes we find in our own Character. There is a Temper of Mind made up of, or

which

which follows from all three, Fear, Hope, Love; namely, Reſignation to the Divine Will, which is the general Temper belonging to this State; which ought to be the habitual Frame of our Mind and Heart, and to be exerciſed at proper Seaſons more diſtinctly, in Acts of Devotion. SERM. XIV.

RESIGNATION to the Will of God is the whole of Piety: It includes in it all that is good, and is a Source of the moſt ſettled Quiet and Compoſure of Mind. There is the general Principle of Submiſſion in our Nature. Man is not ſo conſtituted as to deſire Things, and be uneaſy in the want of them, in Proportion to their known Value: Many other Conſiderations come in to determine the Degrees of Deſire; particularly, whether the Advantage we take a View of, be within the Sphere of our Rank. Who ever felt Uneaſineſs, upon obſerving any of the Advantages Brute Creatures have over us? And yet it is plain they have ſeveral. It is the ſame with reſpect to Advantages belonging to Creatures of a ſuperior Order. Thus, though we ſee a Thing to be highly valuable, yet that it does not belong to our Condition of Being, is ſufficient to ſuſpend our Deſires after it, to make us reſt ſatisfied

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without ſuch Advantage. Now there is juſt the ſame Reaſon for quiet Reſignation in the Want of every Thing equally unattainable, and out of our Reach in particular, though others of our Species be poſſeſſed of it. All this may be applied to the Whole of Life; to poſitive Inconveniences as well as Wants; not indeed to the Senſations of Pain and Sorrow, but to all the Uneaſineſſes of Reflection, Murmuring and Diſcontent. Thus is Humane Nature formed to Compliance, Yielding, Submiſſion of Temper. We find the Principles of it within us; and every one exerciſes it towards ſome Objects or other; *i. e.* feels it with Regard to ſome Perſons, and ſome Circumſtances. Now this is an excellent Foundation of a reaſonable and religious Reſignation. Nature teaches and inclines us to take up with our Lot: The Conſideration, that the Courſe of Things is unalterable, hath a Tendency to quiet the Mind under it, to beget a Submiſſion of Temper to it. But when we can add, that this unalterable Courſe is appointed and continued by infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs; how abſolute ſhould be our Submiſſion, how intire our Truſt and Dependance?

THIS

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THIS would reconcile us to our Condition; prevent all the ſupernumerary Troubles ariſing from Imagination, diſtant Fears, Impatience; all Uneaſineſs, except that which neceſſarily ariſes from the Calamities themſelves we may be under. How many of our Cares ſhould we by this Means be diſburthened of? Cares not properly our own, how apt ſoever they may be to intrude upon us, and we to admit them; the Anxieties of Expectation, Sollicitude about Succeſs and Diſappointment, which in Truth are none of our Concern. How open to every Gratification would that Mind be, which was clear of theſe Incumbrances?

OUR Reſignation to the Will of God may be ſaid to be perfect, when our Will is loſt and reſolved up into His; when we reſt in his Will as our End, as being itſelf moſt juſt, and right, and good. And where is the Impoſſibility of ſuch an Affection to what is juſt, and right, and good, ſuch a Loyalty of Heart to the Governour of the Univerſe, as ſhall prevail over all ſiniſter indirect Deſires of our own? Neither is this at bottom any thing more than Faith, and Honeſty, and Fairneſs of Mind; in a more enlarged Senſe indeed, than thoſe Words are commonly uſed.

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ſed. And as, in common Caſes, Fear and Hope and other Paſſions are raiſed in us by their reſpective Objects: So this Submiſſion of Heart and Soul and Mind, this religious Reſignation, would be as naturally produced by our having juſt Conceptions of Almighty God, and a real Senſe of his Preſence with us. In how low a Degree ſoever this Temper uſually prevails amongſt Men, yet it is a Temper right in itſelf. It is what we owe to our Creator: It is particularly ſuitable to our mortal Condition, and what we ſhould endeavour after for our own Sakes in our Paſſage through ſuch a World as this; where is nothing upon which we can reſt or depend; nothing, but what we are liable to be deceived and diſappointed in. Thus we might *acquaint ourſelves with God, and be at Peace.* This is Piety and Religion in the ſtricteſt Senſe, conſidered as an Habit of Mind: An habitual Senſe of God's Preſence with us; being affected towards him, as preſent, in the Manner his ſuperiour Nature requires from ſuch a Creature as Man: This is to *walk with God.*

LITTLE more need be ſaid of Devotion or religious Worſhip, than that it is this Temper exerted into Act. The Nature of it conſiſts

consists in the actual Exercise of those Affections towards God, which are supposed habitual in good Men. He is always equally present with us: But we are so much taken up with sensible things, that, *Lo, He goeth by us, and we see Him not: He passeth on also, but we perceive Him not* *. Devotion is Retirement, from the World he has made, to Him alone: It is to withdraw from the Avocations of Sense, to employ our Attention wholly upon Him as upon an Object actually present, to yield ourselves up to the Influence of the Divine Presence, and to give full Scope to the Affections of Gratitude, Love, Reverence, Trust and Dependance; of which infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness, is the natural and only adequate Object. We may apply to the whole of Devotion those Words of the Son of *Sirach*: *When you glorifie the Lord, exalt him as much as you can; for even yet will he far exceed: and when you exalt him, put forth all your Strength, and be not weary; for you can never go far enough* †. Our most raised Affections of every Kind cannot but fall short and be disproportionate, when an infinite Being is the Object of them. This is the

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* Job ix. 11. † Ecclus. xliii. 30.

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the higheſt Exerciſe and Employment of Mind, that a Creature is capable of. As this Divine Service and Worſhip is itſelf abſolutely due to God, ſo alſo is it neceſſary in order to a further End, to keep alive upon our Minds a Senſe of his Authority, a Senſe that in our ordinary Behaviour amongſt Men we act under Him as our Governour and Judge.

THUS you ſee the Temper of Mind reſpecting God, which is particularly ſuitable to a State of Imperfection; to Creatures in a Progreſs of Being towards ſomewhat further.

SUPPOSE now this ſomething further attained; that we were arrived at it: What a Perception will it be, to ſee and know and feel that our Truſt was not vain, our Dependance not groundleſs? That the Iſſue, Event, and Conſummation came out ſuch as fully to juſtify and anſwer that Reſignation? If the obſcure View of the divine Perfection, which we have in this World, ought in juſt conſequence to beget an intire Reſignation; what will this Reſignation be exalted into, when *we ſhall ſee Face to Face, and know as we are known?* If we cannot form any diſtinct Notion of that Perfection of the Love of God, which *caſts out all Fear*; of that Enjoyment of him, which will be the Happineſs of

of good Men hereafter; the Conſideration of our Wants and Capacities of Happineſs, and that He will be an adequate Supply to them, muſt ſerve us inſtead of ſuch diſtinct Conception of the particular Happineſs itſelf. SERM. XIV.

LET us then ſuppoſe a Man intirely diſengaged from Buſineſs and Pleaſure, ſitting down alone and at leiſure, to reflect upon himſelf and his own Condition of Being. He would immediately feel that he was by no means compleat of himſelf, but totally inſufficient for his own Happineſs. One may venture to affirm that every Man hath felt this, whether He hath again reflected upon it or not. It is feeling this Deficiency, that they are unſatisfied with themſelves, which makes Men look out for Aſſiſtance from abroad; and which has given Riſe to various Kinds of Amuſements, altogether needleſs any otherwiſe than as they ſerve to fill up the Blank Spaces of Time, and ſo hinder their feeling this Deficiency, and being uneaſie with Themſelves. Now, if theſe external Things we take up with, were really an adequate Supply to this Deficiency of Humane Nature, if by their Means our Capacities and Deſires were all ſatisfied and filled up; then it might be truly ſaid, that we had found out the proper

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per Happineſs of Man; and ſo might ſit down ſatisfied, and be at Reſt in the Enjoyment of it. But if it appears, that the Amuſements, which Men uſually paſs their Time in, are ſo far from coming up to, or anſwering our Notions and Deſires of Happineſs or Good, that they are really no more than what they are commonly called, ſomewhat to paſs away the Time; *i. e.* ſomewhat which ſerves to turn us aſide from, and prevent our attending to this our internal Poverty and Want; if they ſerve only, or chiefly, to ſuſpend, inſtead of ſatisfying our Conceptions and Deſires of Happineſs; if the Want remains, and we have found out little more than barely the Means of making it leſs ſenſible; then are we ſtill to ſeek for ſomewhat to be an adequate Supply to it. It is plain that there is a Capacity in the Nature of Man, which neither Riches, nor Honours, nor ſenſual Gratifications, nor any thing in this World can perfectly fill up, or ſatisfie: There is a deeper and more eſſential Want, than any of theſe Things can be the Supply of. Yet ſurely there is a Poſſibility of Somewhat, which may fill up all our Capacities of Happineſs; Somewhat, in which our Souls may find Reſt; Somewhat, which may be to us that

that ſatisfactory Good we are inquiring after. But it cannot be any Thing which is valuable only as it tends to ſome further End. Thoſe therefore who have got this World ſo much into their Hearts, as not to be able to conſider Happineſs as conſiſting in any Thing but Property and Poſſeſſions, which are only valuable as the Means to ſomewhat elſe, cannot have the leaſt Glimpſe of the Subject before us; which is the End, not the Means; the Thing itſelf, not ſomewhat in order to it. But if you can lay aſide that general, confuſed, undeterminate Notion of Happineſs, as conſiſting in ſuch Poſſeſſions; and fix in your Thoughts, that it really can conſiſt in Nothing but in a Faculty's having its proper Object; you will clearly ſee, that in the cooleſt way of Conſideration, without either the Heat of fanciful Enthuſiaſm, or the Warmth of real Devotion, nothing is more certain, than that an infinite Being may Himſelf be, if He pleaſes, the Supply to all the Capacities of our Nature. All the common Enjoyments of Life are from the Faculties He hath endued us with, and the Objects He hath made ſuitable to them. He may Himſelf be to us infinitely more than all theſe: He may be to us all that we want.

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As our Underſtanding can contemplate itſelf, and our Affections be exerciſed upon themſelves by Reflection, ſo may each be employed in the ſame manner upon any other Mind: And ſince the Supream Mind, the Author and Cauſe of all Things, is the higheſt poſſible Object to Himſelf, He may be an adequate Supply to all the Faculties of our Souls; a Subject to our Underſtanding, and an Object to our Affections,

CONSIDER then: When we ſhall have put off this mortal Body, when we ſhall be deveſted of ſenſual Appetites, and thoſe Poſſeſſions which are now the Means of Gratification ſhall be of no Avail; when this reſtleſs Scene of Buſineſs and vain Pleaſures, which now diverts us from ourſelves, ſhall be all over; We, our proper Self, ſhall ſtill remain: We ſhall ſtill continue the ſame Creatures we are, with Wants to be ſupplied, and Capacities of Happineſs. We muſt have Faculties of Perception, though not ſenſitive ones; and Pleaſure or Uneaſineſs from our Perceptions, as now we have.

THERE are certain Ideas, which we expreſs by the Words, Order, Harmony, Proportion, Beauty, the furtheſt removed from any thing ſenſual. Now what is there in thoſe

thoſe intellectual Images, Forms, or Ideas, which begets that Approbation, Love, Delight, and even Rapture, which is ſeen in ſome Perſon's Faces upon having thoſe Objects preſent to their Minds?——"Mere Enthuſiaſm!"---Be it what it will: There are Objects, Works of Nature and of Art, which all Mankind have Delight from, quite diſtinct from their affording Gratification to ſenſual Appetites; and from quite another View of them, than as being for their Intereſt and further Advantage. The Faculties from which we are capable of theſe Pleaſures, and the Pleaſures themſelves, are as natural, and as much to be accounted for, as any ſenſual Appetite whatever, and the Pleaſure from its Gratification. Words to be ſure are wanting upon this Subject: To ſay, that every thing of Grace and Beauty throughout the whole of Nature, every thing excellent and amiable ſhared in differently lower Degrees by the whole Creation, meet in the Author and Cauſe of all Things; this is an inadequate, and perhaps improper Way of ſpeaking of the Divine Nature: But 'tis manifeſt that abſolute Rectitude, the Perfection of Being, muſt be in all Senſes, and in every Reſpect the higheſt Object to the Mind.

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IN this World it is only the Effects of Wiſdom and Power and Greatneſs, which we diſcern: It is not impoſſible, that hereafter the Qualities Themſelves in the ſupream Being may be the immediate Object of Contemplation. What amazing Wonders are opened to View by late Improvements! What an Object is the Univerſe to a Creature, if there be a Creature who can comprehend its Syſtem! But it muſt be an infinitely higher Exerciſe of the Underſtanding, to view the Scheme of it in that Mind, which projected it, before its Foundations were laid. And ſurely we have Meaning to the Words, when we ſpeak of going further; and viewing, not only this Syſtem in His Mind, but the Wiſdom and Intelligence itſelf from whence it proceeded. The ſame may be ſaid of Power. But ſince Wiſdom and Power are not God, He is a wiſe, a powerful Being; the Divine Nature may therefore be a further Object to the Underſtanding. It is nothing to obſerve that our Senſes give us but an imperfect Knowledge of Things: Effects themſelves, if we knew them thoroughly, would give us but imperfect Notions of Wiſdom and Power; much leſs of his Being, in whom they reſide. I am not ſpeaking of any fanciful

ciful Notion of ſeeing all Things in God; but only repreſenting to you, how much an higher Object to the Underſtanding an infinite Being himſelf is, than the Things which He has made: And this is no more than ſaying, that the Creator is ſuperiour to the Works of his Hands. SERM. XIV.

THIS may be illuſtrated by a low Example. Suppoſe a Machine, the Sight of which would raiſe, and Diſcoveries in its Contrivance gratifie, our Curioſity: the real Delight, in this Caſe, would ariſe from its being the Effect of Skill and Contrivance. This Skill in the Mind of the Artificer would be an higher Object, if we had any Senſes or Ways to diſcern it. For, obſerve, the Contemplation of that Principle, Faculty or Power which produced any Effect, muſt be an higher Exerciſe of the Underſtanding, than the Contemplation of the Effect itſelf. The Cauſe muſt be an higher Object to the Mind than the Effect.

BUT whoever conſiders diſtinctly what the Delight of Knowledge is, will ſee Reaſon to be ſatisfied that it cannot be the chief Good of Man: All this, as it is applicable, ſo it was mentioned with Regard to the Attribute of Goodneſs. I ſay, Goodneſs. Our

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Being and all our Enjoyments are the Effects of it: Juſt Men bear its Reſemblance: But how little do we know of the Original, of what it is in itſelf? Recall what was before obſerved concerning the Affection to moral Characters; which, in how low a Degree ſoever, yet is plainly natural to Man, and the moſt excellent Part of his Nature: Suppoſe this improved, as it may be improved to any Degree whatever, in the *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*; and then ſuppoſe that they had a real View of that *Righteouſneſs, which is an everlaſting Righteouſneſs*; of the Conformity of the Divine Will to the *Law of Truth*, in which the moral Attributes of God conſiſt; of that Goodneſs in the Sovereign Mind, which gave Birth to the Univerſe: Add, what will be true of all good Men hereafter, a Conſciouſneſs of having an Intereſt in what they are contemplating; Suppoſe them able to ſay, *This God is our God for ever and ever*: Would they be any longer to ſeek for what was their chief Happineſs, their final Good? Could the utmoſt Stretch of their Capacities look further? Would not infinite perfect Goodneſs be their very End, the laſt End and Object of their Affections; beyond which they could

could neither have, nor deſire; beyond which they could not form a Wiſh or Thought? SERM. XIV.

CONSIDER wherein that Preſence of a Friend conſiſts, which has often ſo ſtrong an Effect, as wholly to poſſeſs the Mind, and intirely ſuſpend all other Affections and Regards; and which itſelf affords the higheſt Satisfaction and Enjoyment. He is within Reach of the Senſes. Now, as our Capacities of Perception improve, we ſhall have, perhaps by ſome Faculty intirely new, a Perception of God's Preſence with us in a nearer and ſtricter way; ſince it is certain He is more intimately preſent with us, than any Thing elſe can be. Proof of the Exiſtence and Preſence of any Being is quite different from the immediate Perception, the Conſciouſneſs of it. What then will be the Joy of Heart, which His Preſence, and *the Light of His Countenance*, who is the Life of the Univerſe, will inſpire good Men with, when they ſhall have a Senſation, that He is the Suſtainer of their Being, that they exiſt in him; when they ſhall feel his Influence to chear and enliven and ſupport their Frame, in a Manner of which we have now no Conception? He will be in a literal Senſe *their Strength and their Portion for ever.*

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WHEN we ſpeak of things ſo much above our Comprehenſion, as the Employment and Happineſs of a future State, doubtleſs it behoves us to ſpeak with all Modeſty and Diſtruſt of ourſelves. But the Scripture repreſents the Happineſs of that State under the Notions of *ſeeing God, ſeeing him as He is, knowing as we are known*, and *ſeeing Face to Face*. Theſe Words are not general or undetermined, but expreſs a particular determinate Happineſs. And I will be bold to ſay, that nothing can account for, or come up to theſe Expreſſions, but only this, that God himſelf will be an Object to our Faculties, that He Himſelf will be our Happineſs; as diſtinguiſhed from the Enjoyments of the preſent State, which ſeem to ariſe, not immediately from Him, but from the Objects He has adapted to give us Delight.

TO conclude: Let us ſuppoſe a Perſon tired with Care and Sorrow and the Repetition of vain Delights which fill up the Round of Life; ſenſible that every thing here below in its beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity. Suppoſe him to feel that Deficiency of Humane Nature, before taken Notice of; and to be convinced that God alone was the adequate Supply

ply to it. What could be more applicable to a good Man, in this State of Mind; or better expreſs his preſent Wants and diſtant Hopes, his Paſſage through this World as a Progreſs towards a State of Perfection, than the following Paſſages in the Devotions of the Royal Prophet? They are plainly in an higher and more proper Senſe applicable to This, than they could be to any Thing elſe. *I have ſeen an End of all Perfection. Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is none upon Earth that I deſire in Compariſon of Thee. My Fleſh and my Heart faileth: but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever. Like as the Hart deſireth the Water-Brooks: ſo longeth my Soul after Thee, O God. My Soul is athirſt for God, yea, even for the living God: when ſhall I come to appear before Him? How excellent is thy Loving-kindneſs, O God! and the Children of Men ſhall put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings. They ſhall be ſatisfied with the Plenteouſneſs of thy Houſe: and Thou ſhalt give them Drink of thy Pleaſures, as out of the River. For with thee is the Well of Life: And in thy Light ſhall we ſee Light. Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chooſeſt, and receiveſt unto Thee:*

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Thee: he shall dwell in thy Court, and shall be satisfied with the Pleasures of thy House, even of thy holy Temple. Blessed is the People, O Lord, that can rejoice in Thee: they shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance. Their Delight shall be daily in thy Name, and in thy Righteousness shall they make their Boast. For thou art the Glory of their Strength: and in thy Loving-kindness They shall be exalted. As for me, I will behold thy Presence in Righteousness: and when I awake up after thy Likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. Thou shalt shew me the Path of Life; in thy Presence is the Fullness of Joy, and at thy right Hand there is Pleasure for evermore.

SERMON

SERMON XV.

Upon the Ignorance of Man.

ECCLES. viii. 16, 17.

When I applied mine Heart to know Wiſdom, and to ſee the Buſineſs that is done upon the Earth: Then I beheld all the Work of God, that a Man cannot find out the Work that is done under the Sun: Becauſe though a Man labour to ſeek it out, yet he ſhall not find it; yea further, though a wiſe Man think to know it, yet ſhall he not be able to find it.

THE Writings of *Solomon* are very much taken up with Reflections upon Humane Nature, and Humane Life; to which he hath added, in this Book, Reflections upon the Conſtitution of Things. And it is not improbable, that the little Satisfaction, and the great Difficulties he met with

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with in his Reſearches into the general Conſtitution of Nature, might be the Occaſion of his confining himſelf, ſo much as he hath done, to Life and Conduct. However, upon that joint Review he expreſſes great Ignorance of the Works of God, and the Method of his Providence in the Government of the World; great Labour and Wearineſs in the Search and Obſervation he had employed himſelf about; and great Diſappointment, Pain, and even Vexation of Mind, upon that which he had remarked of the Appearances of things, and of what was going forward upon this Earth. This whole Review and Inſpection, and the Reſult of it, Sorrow, Perplexity, a Senſe of his neceſſary Ignorance, ſuggeſts various Reflections to his Mind. But, notwithſtanding all this Ignorance and Diſſatisfaction, there is ſomewhat upon which he aſſuredly reſts and depends; ſomewhat, which is the Concluſion of the whole Matter, and the only Concern of Man. Following this his Method and Train of Reflection, let us conſider,

I. THE Aſſertion of the Text, the Ignorance of Man; that the wiſeſt and moſt knowing cannot comprehend the Ways and Works of God: And then,

II. WHAT

II. WHAT are the juſt Conſequences of this Obſervation and Knowledge of our own Ignorance, and the Reflections which it leads us to.

I. THE wiſeſt and moſt knowing cannot comprehend the Works of God, the Methods and Deſigns of his Providence in the Creation and Government of the World.

CREATION is abſolutely and intirely out of our Depth, and beyond the Extent of our utmoſt Reach. And yet it is as certain that God made the World, as it is certain that Effects muſt have a Cauſe. It is indeed in general no more than Effects, that the moſt knowing are acquainted with: For as to Cauſes, they are as intirely in the Dark as the moſt Ignorant. What are the Laws by which Matter acts upon Matter, but certain Effects; which ſome, having obſerved to be frequently repeated, have reduced to general Rules? The real Nature and Eſſence of Beings likewiſe is what we are altogether ignorant of. All theſe things are ſo intirely out of our Reach, that we have not the leaſt Glimpſe of them. And we know little more of ourſelves, than we do of the World about us: How we were made, how our Being is continued and preſerved, what the Faculties

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Faculties of our Minds are, and upon what the Power of exerciſing them depends. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well.* Our own Nature, and the Objects we are ſurrounded with, ſerve to raiſe our Curioſity; but we are quite out of a Condition of ſatisfying it. Every Secret which is diſcloſed, every Diſcovery which is made, every new Effect which is brought to View, ſerves to convince us of numberleſs more which remain concealed, and which we had before no Suſpicion of. And what if we were acquainted with the whole Creation, in the ſame Way and as thoroughly as we are with any ſingle Object in it? What would all this natural Knowledge amount to? It muſt be a low Curioſity indeed which ſuch ſuperficial Knowledge could ſatisfy. On the contrary, would it not ſerve to convince us of our Ignorance ſtill; and to raiſe our Deſire of knowing the Nature of Things themſelves, the Author, the Cauſe, and the End of them?

As to the Government of the World: Though from Conſideration of the final Cauſes which come within our Knowledge; of Characters, perſonal Merit and Demerit; of

of the Favour and Diſapprobation, which re- SERM. XV.
ſpectively are due and belong to the Righ-
teous and the Wicked, and which therefore
muſt neceſſarily be in a Mind which ſees
things as they really are; though, I ſay,
from hence we may know ſomewhat con-
cerning the Deſigns of Providence in the
Government of the World, enough to en-
force upon us Religion and the Practice of
Virtue: Yet, ſince the Monarchy of the U-
niverſe is a Dominion unlimited in Extent,
and everlaſting in Duration; the general Sy-
ſtem of it muſt neceſſarily be quite beyond
our Comprehenſion. And, ſince there ap-
pears ſuch a Subordination and Reference of
the ſeveral Parts to each other, as to con-
ſtitute it properly one Adminiſtration or Go-
vernment; we cannot have a thorough
Knowledge of any Part, without knowing
the Whole. This ſurely ſhould convince
us, that we are much leſs competent Judges
of the very ſmall Part which comes under
our Notice in this World, than we are apt
to imagine. *No Heart can think upon theſe
things worthily: And who is able to con-
ceive his Way? It is a Tempeſt which no
Man can ſee: For the moſt Part of his
Works are hid. Who can declare the Works*

of

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of his Juſtice? for his Covenant is afar off, and the trial of all things is in the End: i. e. The Dealings of God with the Children of Men are not yet compleated, and cannot be judged of by that Part which is before us. *So that a Man cannot ſay, This is worſe than that: For in time they ſhall be well approved. Thy Faithfulneſs, O Lord, reacheth unto the Clouds: Thy Righteouſneſs ſtandeth like the ſtrong Mountains: Thy Judgments are like the great Deep. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: Alſo he hath ſet the World in their Heart; ſo that no Man can find out the Work that God maketh from the Beginning to the End.* And thus St. *Paul* concludes a long Argument upon the various Diſpenſations of Providence: *O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out! For who hath known the Mind of the Lord?*

THUS the Scheme of Providence, the Ways and Works of God, are too vaſt, of too large Extent for our Capacities. There is, as I may ſpeak, ſuch an Expence of Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, in the

the Formation and Government of the World, as is too much for us to take in or comprehend. Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs are manifeſt to us in all thoſe Works of God, which come within our View: But there are likewiſe infinite Stores of each poured forth throughout the Immenſity of the Creation; no Part of which can be thoroughly underſtood, without taking in its Reference and Reſpect to the whole: And this is what we have not Faculties for. SERM. XV.

AND as the Works of God, and his Scheme of Government, are above our Capacities thoroughly to comprehend: So there poſſibly may be Reaſons which originally made it fit that many things ſhould be concealed from us, which we have perhaps natural Capacities of underſtanding; many things concerning the Deſigns, Methods and Ends of Divine Providence in the Government of the World. There is no Manner of Abſurdity in ſuppoſing a Veil on Purpoſe drawn over ſome Scenes of infinite Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, the Sight of which might ſome Way or other ſtrike us too ſtrongly; or that better Ends are deſigned and ſerved by their being concealed, than could be by

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their being expoſed to our Knowledge. The Almighty may caſt Clouds and Darkneſs round about him, for Reaſons and Purpoſes of which we have not the leaſt Glimpſe or Conception.

HOWEVER, it is ſurely reaſonable, and what might have been expected, that Creatures in ſome Stage of their Being, ſuppoſe in the Infancy of it, ſhould be placed in a State of Diſcipline and Improvement, where their Patience and Submiſſion is to be tried by Afflictions, where Temptations are to be reſiſted, and Difficulties gone through in the Diſcharge of their Duty. Now if the greateſt Pleaſures and Pains of the preſent Life may be overcome and ſuſpended, as they manifeſtly may, by Hope and Fear, and other Paſſions and Affections; then the Evidence of Religion, and the Senſe of the Conſequences of Virtue and Vice, might have been ſuch, as intirely in all Caſes to prevail over thoſe Afflictions, Difficulties and Temptations; prevail over them ſo, as to render them abſolutely none at all. But the very Notion itſelf, now mentioned, of a State of Diſcipline and Improvement, neceſſarily excludes ſuch ſenſible Evidence and Conviction of Religion, and of the Conſe-

quences of Virtue and Vice. Religion consists in Submiſſion and Reſignation to the Divine Will. Our Condition in this World is a School of Exerciſe for this Temper: And our Ignorance, the Shallowneſs of our Reaſon, the Temptations, Difficulties, Afflictions, which we are expoſed to, all equally contribute to make it ſo. The general Obſervation may be carried on; and whoever will attend to the thing will plainly ſee, that leſs ſenſible Evidence, with leſs Difficulty in Practice, is the ſame, as more ſenſible Evidence, with greater Difficulty in Practice. Therefore Difficulties in Speculation as much come into the Notion of a State of Diſcipline, as Difficulties in Practice: And ſo the ſame Reaſon or Account is to be given of both. Thus, though it is indeed abſurd to talk of the greater Merit of Aſſent, upon little or no Evidence, than upon Demonſtration; yet the ſtrict Diſcharge of our Duty, with leſs ſenſible Evidence, does imply in it a better Character, than the ſame Diligence in the Diſcharge of it, upon more ſenſible Evidence. This fully accounts for and explains that Aſſertion of our Saviour, * *Bleſ-*

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* Joh. xx. 29.

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ſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed; have become Chriſtians and obeyed the Goſpel, upon leſs ſenſible Evidence, than that which *Thomas*, to whom he is ſpeaking, inſiſted upon.

BUT after all, the ſame Account is to be given, why we were placed in theſe Circumſtances of Ignorance, as why Nature has not furniſhed us with Wings; namely, that we were deſigned to be Inhabitants of this Earth. I am afraid we think too highly of ourſelves; of our Rank in the Creation, and of what is due to us. What Sphere of Action, what Buſineſs is aſſigned to Man, that he has not Capacities and Knowledge fully equal to? It is manifeſt he has Reaſon, and Knowledge, and Faculties ſuperfour to the Buſineſs of the preſent World: Faculties which appear ſuperfluous, if we do not take in the Reſpect which they have to ſomewhat further, and beyond it. If to acquire Knowledge were our proper End, we ſhould indeed be but poorly provided? But if Somewhat elſe be our Buſineſs and Duty, we may, notwithſtanding our Ignorance, be well enough furniſhed for it; and the Obſervation of our Ignorance

may be of Aſſiſtance to us in the Diſcharge of it. SERM. XV.

II. LET us then conſider, what are the Conſequences of this Knowledge and Obſervation of our own Ignorance, and the Reflection it leads us to.

Firſt, WE may learn from it, with what Temper of Mind a Man ought to enquire into the Subject of Religion; namely, with Expectation of finding Difficulties, and with a Diſpoſition to take up and reſt ſatisfied with any Evidence whatever, which is real.

HE ſhould before-hand expect Things myſterious, and ſuch as he will not be able throughly to comprehend, or go to the Bottom of. To expect a diſtinct comprehenſive View of the whole Subject, clear of Difficulties and Objections, is to forget our Nature and Condition; neither of which admit of ſuch Knowledge, with reſpect to any Science whatever. And to inquire with this Expectation, is not to inquire as a Man, but as one of another Order of Creatures.

DUE Senſe of the general Ignorance of Man would alſo beget in us a Diſpoſition to take up and reſt ſatisfied with any Evidence whatever, which is real. I mention this as the contrary to a Diſpoſition, of which there

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are not wanting Instances, to find Fault with and reject Evidence, because it is not such as was desired. If a Man were to walk by Twilight, must he not follow his Eyes as much as if it were broad Day and clear Sunshine? Or if he were obliged to take a Journey by Night, would he not *give heed to* any *Light shining in the Darkness, till the Day should break and the Day-Star arise?* It would not be altogether unnatural for him to reflect how much better it were to have Day-light; he might perhaps have great Curiosity to see the Country round about him; he might lament that the Darkness concealed many extended Prospects from his Eyes, and wish for the Sun to draw away the Veil: But how ridiculous would it be, to reject with Scorn and Disdain the Guidance and Direction which that lesser Light might afford him, because it was not the Sun itself? If the Make and Constitution of Man, the Circumstances he is placed in, or the Reason of Things affords the least Hint or Intimation, that Virtue is the Law he is born under; Scepticism itself should lead him to the most strict and inviolable Practice of it; that he may not make the dreadful Experiment, of leaving the Course of Life marked out for him by Nature, whatever

ever that Nature be, and entring Paths of his own, of which he can know neither the Dangers nor the End. For though no Danger be ſeen, yet Darkneſs, Ignorance and Blindneſs are no manner of Security. SERM. XV.

Secondly, OUR Ignorance is the proper Anſwer to many Things, which are called Objections againſt Religion; particularly, to thoſe which ariſe from the Appearances of Evil and Irregularity in the Conſtitution of Nature and the Government of the World. In all other Caſes 'tis thought neceſſary to be thoroughly acquainted with the whole of a Scheme, even one of ſo narrow a Compaſs as thoſe which are formed by Men, in order to judge of the Goodneſs or Badneſs of it: And the moſt ſlight and ſuperficial View of any Humane Contrivance comes abundantly nearer to a thorough Knowledge of it, than that Part, which we know of the Government of the World, does to the general Scheme and Syſtem of it; to the whole Set of Laws by which it is governed. From our Ignorance of the Conſtitution of Things, and the Scheme of Providence in the Government of the World; from the Reference the ſeveral Parts have to each other, and to the Whole; and from our not being able to

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see the End and the Whole; it follows, that however perfect Things are, they must even necessarily appear to us otherwise, less perfect than they are *.

Thirdly,

* Suppose some very *complicated Piece of Work*, some *System* of *Constitution*, formed for some *general End*, to which each of the *Parts* had a *Reference*. The Perfection or Justness of this Work or Constitution would consist in the Reference and Respect, which the several Parts have to the general Design. This Reference of Parts to the general Design may be infinitely various, both in Degree and Kind. Thus one Part may only contribute and be subservient to another; this to a third; and so on through a long Series, the last Part of which alone may contribute immediately and directly to the general Design. Or a Part may have this distant Reference to the general Design, and may also contribute immediately to it. For Instance: If the general Design or End, for which the complicated Frame of Nature was brought into Being, is Happiness; whatever affords present Satisfaction, and likewise tends to carry on the Course of Things, hath this double Respect to the general Design. Now suppose a Spectator of that Work or Constitution was in a great Measure ignorant of such various Reference to the general End, whatever that End be; and that, upon a very slight and partial View which we had of the Work, several Things appeared to his Eye as disproportionate and wrong; others, just and beautiful: What would He gather from these Appearances? He would immediately conclude there was a Probability, if he could see the whole Reference of the Parts appearing wrong to the general Design, that this would destroy the Appearance of Wrongness and Disproportion: But there is no Probability, that the Reference would destroy the particular right Appearances, though that Reference might shew the things already appearing just, to be so likewise in an higher Degree or another Manner. There is a Probability, that the right Appearances were intended: There is

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Thirdly, SINCE the Conſtitution of Nature, and the Methods and Deſigns of Providence in the Government of the World, are above our Comprehenſion, we ſhould acquieſce in, and reſt ſatisfied with our Ignorance; turn our Thoughts from that which is above and beyond us, and apply ourſelves to that which is level to our Capacities, and which is our real Buſineſs and Concern. Knowledge is not our proper Happineſs. Whoever will in the leaſt attend to the thing will ſee, that 'tis the Gaining, not the Having of it, which is the Entertainment of the Mind. Indeed, if the proper Happineſs of Man conſiſted in Knowledge conſidered as a Poſſeſſion or Treaſure, Men who are poſſeſſed of the largeſt Share would have a very ill Time of it; as they would be infinitely more ſenſible than others, of their Poverty in this Reſpect. Thus *He who increaſes Knowledge would* eminently *increaſe Sorrow.*

Men

is no Probability, that the wrong Appearances were. We cannot ſuſpect Irregularity and Diſorder to be deſigned. The Pillars of a Building appear beautiful; but their being likewiſe its Support does not deſtroy that Beauty: There ſtill remains a Reaſon to believe that the Architect intended the beautiful Appearance, after we have found out the Reference, Support. It would be reaſonable for a Man of himſelf to think thus, upon the firſt Piece of Architecture he ever ſaw.

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Men of deep Reſearch and curious Inquiry ſhould juſt be put in Mind, not to miſtake what they are doing. If their Diſcoveries ſerve the Cauſe of Virtue and Religion, in the way of Proof, Motive to Practice, or Aſſiſtance in it; or if they tend to render Life leſs unhappy, and promote its Satisfactions; then they are moſt uſefully employed: But bringing Things to Light, alone and of itſelf, is of no manner of Uſe, any otherwiſe than as an Entertainment or Diverſion. Neither is this at all amiſs, if it does not take up the Time which ſhould be employed in better Work. But it is evident that there is another Mark ſet up for us to aim at; another End appointed us to direct our Lives to: An End, which the moſt Knowing may fail of, and the moſt Ignorant arrive at. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law.* Which Reflection of *Moſes*, put in general Terms, is, that the only Knowledge, which is of any Avail to us, is that which teaches us our Duty, or aſſiſts us in the Diſcharge of it. The Oeconomy of the Univerſe, the Courſe of Nature, Almighty Power exerted in the Creation

ation and Government in the World, is out of our Reach? What would be the Conſequence, if we could really get an Inſight into theſe Things, is very uncertain; whether it would aſſiſt us in, or divert us from what we have to do in this preſent State. If then there be a Sphere of Knowledge, of Contemplation and Employment, level to our Capacities, and of the utmoſt Importance to us; we ought ſurely to apply ourſelves with all Diligence to This our proper Buſineſs, and eſteem every thing elſe nothing, nothing as to us, in Compariſon of it. Thus *Job*, diſcourſing of natural Knowledge, how much it is above us, and of Wiſdom in general, ſays, *God underſtandeth the Way thereof, and He knoweth the Place thereof. And unto Man He ſaid, Behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from Evil is Underſtanding.* Other Orders of Creatures may perhaps be let into the ſecret Counſels of Heaven; and have the Deſigns and Methods of Providence, in the Creation and Government of the World, communicated to them: But this does not belong to our Rank or Condition. *The Fear of the Lord*, and *to depart from Evil*, is the only Wiſdom which Man ſhould aſpire after, as His Work and Buſineſs. SERM. XV.

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Buſineſs. The ſame is ſaid, and with the ſame Connexion and Context, in the Concluſion of the Book of *Eccleſiaſtes*. Our Ignorance, and the little we can know of other Things, affords a Reaſon why we ſhould not perplex ourſelves about them: But no way invalidates that which is the *Concluſion of the whole Matter, Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole Concern of Man.* So that *Socrates* was not the firſt who endeavoured to draw Men off from labouring after, and laying Streſs upon other Knowledge, in Compariſon of that which related to Morals. Our Province is Virtue and Religion, Life and Manners; the Science of improving the Temper, and making the Heart better. This is the Field aſſigned us to cultivate: How much it has lain neglected is indeed aſtoniſhing. Virtue is demonſtrably the Happineſs of Man: It conſiſts in good Actions, proceeding from a good Principle, Temper or Heart. Overt-Acts are intirely in our Power. What remains is, that we learn to *keep our Heart*; to govern and regulate our Paſſions, Mind, Affections: that ſo we may be free from the Impotencies of Fear, Envy, Malice, Covetouſneſs, Ambition; that we may be clear of theſe, conſider-

ed as Vices ſeated in the Heart, conſidered as conſtituting a general wrong Temper; from which general wrong Frame of Mind, all the Miſtaken Purſuits, and far the greateſt Part of the Unhappineſs of Life, proceed. He, who ſhould find out one Rule to aſſiſt us in this Work, would deſerve infinitely better of Mankind, than all the Improvers of other Knowledge put together. SERM. XV.

Laſtly, LET us adore that infinite Wiſdom and Power and Goodneſs, which is above our Comprehenſion. *To whom hath the Root of Wiſdom been revealed? Or who hath known her wiſe Counſels? There is one wiſe and greatly to be feared; the Lord ſitting upon his Throne. He created her, and ſaw her, and numbred her, and poured her out upon all his Works.* If it be thought a conſiderable thing, to be acquainted with a few, a very few, of the Effects of infinite Power and Wiſdom; the Situation, Bigneſs, and Revolution of ſome of the heavenly Bodies; what Sentiments ſhould our Minds be filled with concerning Him, who appointed to each its Place and Meaſure and Sphere of Motion, all which are kept with the moſt uniform Conſtancy? *Who ſtretched out the Heavens, and telleth the Number of the Stars,*

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Stars, and calleth them all by their Names Who laid the Foundations of the Earth, who comprehendeth the Duſt of it in a Meaſure, and weigheth the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance. And, when we have recounted all the Appearances which come within our View, he muſt add, *Lo, theſe are Part of His ways; but how little a Portion is heard of Him? Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection? It is as high as Heaven; what canſt thou do? deeper than Hell; what canſt thou know?*

THE Concluſion is, that in all Lowlineſs of Mind we ſet lightly by Ourſelves: That we form our Temper to an implicit Submiſſion to the Divine Majeſty; beget within ourſelves an abſolute Reſignation to all the Methods of his Providence, in his Dealings with the Children of Men: That, in the deepeſt Humility of our Souls, we proſtrate ourſelves before Him, and join in that celeſtial Song; *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints: Who ſhall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name?*

FINIS.

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